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THE PROLOGUE
TO
THE CANTERBURY TALES
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

THE TEXT COLLATED WITH THE SEVEN OLDEST MSS., AND A LIFE OF
THE AUTHOR, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, GRAMMAR, CRITICAL
AND EXPLANATORY NOTES, AND INDEX TO OBSOLETE
AND DIFFICULT WORDS.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE,	3
THE ARGUMENT AND CHARACTERS OF THE PROLOGUE, . .	5
LIFE OF CHAUCER,	11
ESSAY ON THE LANGUAGE OF CHAUCER,	15
HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO THE TIME OF CHAUCER,	18
THE PROLOGUE, WITH NOTES,	38
GLOSSARY,	103

BT 100

PREFACE

EXCEPT in the use of some words which have since become obsolete, and in the retention or partial retention of certain inflections, the language of Chaucer is essentially the same as our own; and were he a prose writer, one might easily, all philological considerations apart, make him intelligible to all by simply giving a glossary of such words as have gone entirely out of use, and modernizing the spelling and inflections of those which are common.

But Chaucer wrote with metre and rime, and all attempts to make him more intelligible by reducing his quaint archaic English to the diction of the nineteenth century, and in obliterating the rhythm, which, whatever views one may hold as regards metre and rime, is essential to all forms of poetry. Indeed the adapters of Chaucer have mostly gone further, and being ignorant of the grammatical value of the several inflections, have, by confusing different tenses, numbers, and even parts of speech, turned his wit to nonsense.

The devotion with which the study of the childhood and youth of our mother tongue has within the last score years been taken up by a small band of earnest students, has not only brought to light several very old MSS., but has enabled us to examine them critically, because intelligently, and to make great progress towards the construction of a text more correct than any single one extant.

The only way to understand Chaucer is to learn his language, and the little labour given to the study will be well repaid by the enjoyment; by the discovery that his verse, instead of being the rude and halting doggerel which "modernized" texts present, is almost as finished and flowing as that of Pope, and incomparably more natural and musical. It reflects the childhood, the springtide of our poetry; it is full of the sights and sounds of the fields and woods, and of pictures of the life of merry England in the olden days.

In the determination of the text I have made use of Mr. T. Wright's revision of the Harleian MS., and Dr. Morris' text which he has constructed by collation with the six texts edited by Mr. Furnivall, and I have myself compared it line by line with these, adopting whichever reading seemed to me to give the best sense and sound, and occasionally giving the more important variations if they seemed of equal merit or probability.

But I have introduced a new feature, viz., an attempt by the employment of different type to indicate the correct metre and pronuncia-

tion, so far at least as is essential to the scanning of the verse. This qualification is necessary, for we have few means of knowing how the individual vowels and consonants were sounded. We can, for example, generally appreciate the poetry of the Elizabethan and seventeenth century writers without strictly following even what we know to have been their own pronunciation. We must, indeed, occasionally read *Room* for *Rome* in Shakespeare, when he plays on the words—

“Now it is Rome indeed and room enough.”

—*Julius Caesar*, act i. sc. 2, line 156 (Globe).

and in this poem, lines 670–1, where “Rome” rimes with “to me,” and must plainly be pronounced like “roomy;” or “*achies* in one’s *jintes*,” in Butler; but it is not necessary to read of “resaving *services* of goold and yellow *chiney*,” or of “being obleeged to poonish a marchant,” since these peculiarities do not affect the verse.

The signs I have employed are explained in the notice on the Versification. I may, however, take this opportunity of justifying an idea of my own with regard to Chaucer’s verse, in which I fear all will not agree. Rime and metre were not indigenous among the Teutonic nations, but derived from the Romance languages, and I believe that before they were completely naturalized among us they were adopted with the peculiarities of French poetry, and that consequently when a line ended with a syllable containing a silent “e” that vowel was *always* sounded, though not so full or decidedly as others. I mean, to take a simple illustration, that though the word *pilgrimage* occurring in the middle of a line had but three syllables, yet when it ended a line it was read as of four; not so strongly pronounced as in the plural *pilgrimages*, but still it was pronounced. I had thought of using some special mark, as a single dot over the letter, but I have foregone this refinement, and written it, as I have other e’s which I wish the reader to sound, thus, ě.

For the Life of Chaucer and the Grammar of the Language in his time I am greatly indebted to Dr. Morris’ edition of the Prologue and Knightes Tale in the Clarendon Press Series, from which I have also borrowed freely in the notes; but I have had recourse to every historical and philological authority within my reach, in the hope of rendering this little work as perfect and useful as I could.

THE ARGUMENT AND CHARACTERS
OF THE PROLOGUE.

The general plan of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* seems to have been suggested by the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, which had appeared some thirty years before. Each is a collection of stories more or less romantic, drawn from the French and Provençal literature of the Troubadours, and the older Italian writers; some again being traceable through these to Arabian, or, though oddly metamorphosed in transmission, to classic sources, the whole strung together by the simple artifice of being supposed to be told in turn by the members of a company who, having no present employment, agree thus to pass away their time.

But in the conception of their plots Boccaccio and Chaucer differ as strongly as did their individual characters or those of their respective societies. The Italian imagines five elegant *dilettanti* nobles with a like number of accomplished and youthful ladies retiring to the beautiful gardens of a villa in the country in order to escape the dangers and to avoid the horrors of the pestilence which in 1348 ravaged the city of Florence.

Gay, selfish, and callous to the sufferings of their poorer fellow-citizens, they spend their time in a round of feasting and revelry, or in walking amid the enchanting scenery of the Apennines, regardless of aught but their own enjoyment. Chaucer, on the contrary, was full of human sympathy, and though familiar with the languages, literature, and society of France and Italy, intensely English. Sprung from the middle class, but thrown by his varied avocations into contact with men and women of every rank, he had ample opportunities for cultivating a natural insight into character, he could appreciate whatever was good and true whether in "gentil Knight" or "poure Persoun" and his "Plowman brother," and had a no less keen perception of the vices, the faults, and the foibles of high and low. Yet his satire, though unsparing, is rather of the nature of kindly ridicule than stern invective; he aims rather at making its objects appear ludicrous, or at the worst contemptible, than as exciting hatred, indignation, or disgust; he laughs them down, and we, if not they themselves, enjoy the laugh.

Extremely happy is the little incident which brings together a motley crowd from every grade except the highest and the very lowest. A mere accident, but one which serves his purpose better than the most elaborate plot, and so probable and natural that one can scarcely believe it had no foundation in fact.

One fine evening in April, while he is staying at the Tabard, an old inn in Southwark, a company of pilgrims assemble, for the most part strangers to one another, with no other common purpose than that of mutual protection from the perils of the road, in their journey to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. At supper their host, a jolly and sociable fellow, offers to accompany them as their guide, having, he says, often conducted such parties in that capacity; and at the same time proposes that in order to enliven the tedium of the journey each shall tell a couple of tales on the way thither and the same number on their return. This advice is promptly agreed to, the order in which they shall speak determined by drawing lots, and the poet, anticipating much enjoyment from the study of characters so various and under circumstances so free from restraint, resolves on joining the party himself, and on writing an account of what he should see and hear.

The several personages are described with consummate skill. In a few lines we are made acquainted with their features and dress, their manners and characters; they stand out before us in strong individuality, not like portraits in a picture-gallery, but as men and women living, acting, talking with us. Though Chaucer never wrote a drama in the common acceptation of the word, he evinces in this Prologue the possession of dramatic powers of the highest order. He never aims at effect by contrast or exaggeration, the most trivial features are consistent with the rest; an under-current of fun pervades the whole, and the most telling hits often appear as by or after thoughts, adding greatly to their force.

First, we have the "verray perfight gentil Knight," a representative of the old chivalry, then fast passing away, a veteran warrior, but "of his port as meke as is a mayde," in short, the ideal knight *sans peur et sans reproche*.

His son, a young "Squyer," as gay as he was brave, more accomplished than his father in the arts of peace, but having already proved his prowess in the last French war, was followed by a single attendant, an honest and trusty "yeman" from among his father's tenantry.

Next comes the Lady Prioress, who makes no pretensions to religious austerity, but on the contrary, she

"Peynede hire to countrefetis chere
Of court, and ben estatlich of manere."

A woman of fashion, her heart still clings to the world, she lavishes her affections on her lap-dogs, unmindful of the sick and poor, and her very brooch bears the significant motto of gallantry, "*Amor vincit omnia*." In her suite are a nun and three priests.

Then we meet a type of which we still have a representative in the fox-hunting country parson, a Monk proud of his horsemanship and his hounds, richly attired and fond of good living rather than of study, certain, as Chaucer slyly hints, of early promotion to an abbacy, just one of those luxurious idle monks who roused the indignant denunciations of Wycliff.

After him comes a Friar, who under the cloke of mendicancy covers a deep-rooted love of money and selfish indulgence, being "the bestē beggere in his hous," who "knew the tavernes wel in every toun," and by his power of confession and absolution exerted unbounded influence over women old and young. Scarcely less odious and more contemptible is the hypocritical Pardoner or seller of indulgences, one of the class whose bare-faced impostures first aroused the spirits of Luther and the German reformers. His wallet is "bretful of pardouns come from Rome al hoot," and he has an inexhaustible stock of reliques and bones, which the poet insinuates are those of *pigs*, not saints.

His especial friend and companion is a Sompnour or Summoner, an officer of the ecclesiastical courts, a low ignorant and dissolute bully, who holds a terrible power over "the yongē gurlēs of his diocese" in spite of his repulsive appearance and character.

Chaucer was not at heart an irreligious man, and waged no war with the clergy as ministers of religion, but he was a Protestant in the sense that he wished to expose the vices, the hypocrisy, and the worldliness of the ecclesiastical orders, universally abandoned as they were to corruption and venality. These, from which the prelates were in general selected, were recruited from the higher ranks of society; the secular clergy, on the contrary, for the most part drawn from the humbler classes, were often men of deep and earnest piety, and, thanks to the foundations at the universities, of far greater learning than the former. Connected by ties of blood and sympathy with the poor among whom they laboured, and than

whom they were too often little richer, they used the influence which their spiritual character gave them in their behalf; and to their ministrations at the death-beds of the proud nobles we owe more than to anything else the gradual emancipation of the English peasantry from a state of absolute serfdom.

Chaucer was far too generous to ignore such goodness, and he has left us in the character of the "poure Persoun of a toun" a picture of simple, unselfish piety, such as has never been surpassed. Poor in this world's goods, "but riche of holy thought and werk," brother to a plowman, but "a lerned man, a clerk" (*i.e.*, a university man), "that Cristës gospel trewely woldë preche;" liberal to the poor, though poor himself; self-denying and contented with his lot, he did not seek preferment, but endeavoured by gentleness and sympathy, by well-judged remonstrance, and above all by his own good example, "to drawë folk to heven," his character is beautifully summed up in the last couplet,

" But Cristës lore, and his aposties twelvë
He taughte, but first he folwede it himselvë."

To the same class we must refer the "Clerk of Oxenford," though as yet he had not got a benefice. He lived apart from the world, spending his little money on books, a poor but earnest scholar, grave and thoughtful in speech.

After the clergy the other learned professions are represented by one member of each. The "Doctour of Phisik" is a capital sketch of the physician of the day. A learned ostentatious charlatan, deeply versed in astrology, magic, and all the useless lore of the dark ages, though

" His studie was but litel on the Bibel."

Gorgeously attired to command respect, temperate in his habits, and not wanting in worldly wisdom, for "ful redy hadde he his apotecaries," and "ech of hem made other for to wynnë;" a practice which is not quite extinct in our own time, though repudiated by every honourable practitioner.

The "Sergeant of Lawe" is a clever and favourable picture of the shrewd and successful pleader, with every statute and precedent by rote, and possessing that element of success, the art of appearing even busier and wiser than he really was. With him there was a wealthy Frankleyn or country gentleman, the prototype of the port-wine-loving squire of a bygone generation, at whose ample and

hospitable board the lawyer had often sat when associated in the work of the sessions. He was a county magistrate, and had sat in parliament as knight of his shire.

Turning now to the middle classes we meet a "Marchaunt," acute in his dealings, and if not always prosperous, able to impress others with the belief that he is so. He can speak of little else than his business, but is cautious not to say too much. Four well-to-do Burgesses, whose dress bespeaks their wealth, and members of their respective guilds, at a time when the city companies were really haberdashers, weavers, &c., as indicated by their names. Like the traditional alderman, they are fond of good living, and bring with them a professed cook.

The gentle upright "Maunciple," ever mindful of his employer's interests; the not less able but utterly unscrupulous "Reeve" or Bailiff, an "unjust steward," overbearing to his inferiors but serving his master efficiently, though from motives purely selfish, and abusing the confidence which his ability earned him for the purpose of lining his own nest; the coarse, vulgar, and brutal "Mellere;" and the humble "Plowman," who in his narrower field exhibits the same simple Christian life and example of charity as his clerical brother; with the "Schipman" and the "Wyf of Bathe," complete the motley company.

"The Schipman" is a genuine sailor, brave, hardy, and master of his craft, more in his element in a storm in the Bay of Biscay than on a horse. Not troubled with an over-nice conscience, he was ready to combine the character of a freebooter with that of trader, not unlike the Raleighs and other privateer captains of a later age.

The "Wyf of Bathe" is, besides the "Lady Prioress," and her attendant nun, of whom, however, we have no description—the only female personage in the company. It seems strange that Chaucer, who elsewhere shows his high estimation of womanly virtue, and especially of good wives, should not have given some other female characters, corresponding, for example, to the Manciple or the Frankleyn. If not a caricature, and there is no reason to suppose her to be such, she presents a dark picture of the morality of women of her class. A well-to-do cloth-worker from the west of England, trading on her own account, she belongs to the same grade of society as the group of city liverymen. Violent in temper, bold and wanton in dress and manners, loud, coarse, and loose in her language, and as loose in her morals, she is a living satire on the mere conventional observance of the externals of religion, having visited

Rome and the Holy Sepulchre, as well as the chief shrines of the Continent, and being regular in her attendance at the church in the superstitious rites of Relic Sunday, on which occasion she often gave way to her proud and overbearing disposition.

Such are the *dramatis personæ* of this matchless Prologue, which in less than nine hundred lines brings before our eyes nearly the whole of English society in the fourteenth century more vividly than the most laborious history.

The tales which follow reflect the minds of the narrators, but that part of the work Chaucer did not live to complete. The Prologue is, however, the most valuable as the most original portion, and from the light it throws on the manners and thoughts of our countrymen of that generation, deserves the most careful study.

LIFE OF CHAUCER.

THE father and grandfather of Geoffrey Chaucer were well-to-do citizens and vintners of the city of London. The guilds and city companies were at that time what their names imply, associations of men engaged in the same trade or industry, and, accordingly, we find John Chaucer, the father of the poet, keeping a wine-shop and hostelrie on the banks of the Thames, near the outfall of the Wall Brook, probably where the Cannon Street Station now stands, and here Geoffrey was born and spent his early years.

What education he gave his son, and whether he intended him for the professions of the law or the church, or for the less ambitious career of a citizen, we do not know.

The author of the "Court of Love" represents himself as "of Cambridge, clerk;" but even if this could be proved to mean that he was a student of that university, there are very strong grounds for believing that the poem has been wrongly attributed to Chaucer. There is, in fact, not a shadow of evidence that Chaucer studied at either Oxford or Cambridge, though Leland asserts that he had been at each.

Young men designed for secular callings frequently finished their education by attaching themselves to the households or retinue of some nobleman, with whom they enjoyed the advantages of introduction to good society, and sometimes of foreign travel on political or military enterprises.

John Chaucer attended Edward III. and his Queen Philippa in 1338 in their expedition to Flanders, but in what capacity we have no means of learning. In 1357 we find a Geoffrey Chaucer in the household of Elizabeth, wife of Lionel, third son of Edward, and if he were our poet he doubtless owed his appointment to his father's former connection with the court. In 1359 he served, still probably in attendance on Lionel, with the army of Edward in France, and was, as he himself informs us, taken prisoner, but ransomed in the following year at the ignominious peace of Bretigny.

In 1367 and the following years we find entries in the Issue Rolls of the Court of Exchequer and in the Tower Rolls of the payment to him of a pension of twenty marks for former and present services

as one of the valets of the king's chamber. While in attendance on the members of the royal family he had formed an unreturned and hopeless attachment to some lady of far higher social rank, which inspired his first original poem, the "Compleynt to Pite;" and since, in his elegy on the death of Blanche, the young wife of John of Gaunt, entitled "The Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse," he confesses that the "sickness" that he "had suffred this eight yeere" is now past, there can be little doubt that she was the object of his affection.

From 1370 to 1380 he was engaged in not less than seven diplomatic missions to Italy, France, and Flanders, for which he received various sums of money, as well as a valuable appointment in the customs; in 1374 he obtained the lease of the house above the Aldgate from the corporation of London, and in this year the Duke of Lancaster granted him a pension of £10 for services rendered by himself and his wife Philippa. We hear of a Philippa Chaucer as one of the Ladies of the Bedchamber to the Queen Philippa as early as 1366; but since in the "Compleynte to Pite" in 1367 he expresses a hope that his high-born lady love may yet accept his love, it is probable that she was a namesake or cousin of Geoffrey, and that he did not marry her until the nuptials of the Lady Blanche with the duke had extinguished his hopes of ever making her his wife, perhaps, indeed, not until after her death.

In 1372-73 he remained in Italy for nearly a year on the king's business, where, if he did not make the acquaintance of Petrarch and Boccaccio, as is supposed by some, it is certain that the study of the Italian poetry and literature exerted a marked influence on his own writings, as seen in the works composed during this middle period of his literary career, the "Lyfe of Seynte Cecile," "Parlament of Foules," "Compleynt of Mars," "Anelide and Arcite," "Boece," "Former Age," "Troilus and Cresseide," and the "House of Fame."

At a later period he wrote his "Truth," "Legende of Good Women," his "Moder of God," and began the "Canterbury Tales."

In 1386 he was elected a knight of the shire for the county of Kent, and in this year we obtain the only authentic evidence of his age. In a deposition made by him at Westminster, where the parliament was met, in the famous trial between Richard, Lord Scrope, and Sir Robert Grosvenor, the council clerk entered him, doubtless on his own statement, as forty years old and upwards,

and as having borne arms for twenty-seven years. We may therefore conclude that he was born in 1339, which would make him at that time forty-seven years old, and the twenty-seven years would count from his coming of age. He would thus have been eighteen when he became page to the Princess Elizabeth, and twenty in the French war.

His patron, John of Gaunt, was now abroad, and John's rival, the Duke of Gloucester, in power. The commission appointed by the parliament to inquire into the administration of the customs and subsidies, dismissed him from his two appointments in the customs, and soon after even his pensions were revoked. He was thus reduced from affluence to poverty, and his feelings are expressed in his beautiful "Balade of Truth;" to add to his troubles his wife died next year (1389), yet amid grief and penury he went on with his merry "Canterbury Tales."

With the reassumption of the government by Richard II. in 1389 and the return of the Lancastrian party to power, fortune smiled once more on the poor poet, but his income was at best small and uncertain, and his tenure of some petty offices short and precarious. He wrote about this time his translation of a "Treatise on the Astrolabe, for his son Lewis," his "Compleynt of Venus," "Envoy to Skogan," "Marriage," "Gentleness," "Lack of Steadfastness," "Fortune and his Compleynt to his Purse," besides carrying on his greatest work, the "Tales," which was left unfinished at his death. This event occurred in 1400 at a house in the garden of the Chapel of St. Mary, Westminster, the lease of which he had taken in the previous year.

He was probably in his sixty-first or sixty-second year when he died.

In the carefully executed portrait by Ocleve, preserved among the Harl. MSS., and the words which he puts into the mouth of "mine host" of the Tabard, as well as from admissions no less than deliberate expressions of feeling scattered through his works, we can form a pretty complete notion of his personal appearance, habits, and character.

Stout in body but small and fair of face, shy and reserved with strangers, but fond—perhaps too fond—of "good felaweschip," of wine and song; passionately given to study, often after his day's labours at the customs sitting up half the night poring over old musty MSS., French, Latin, Italian, or English, till his head ached, and his eyes were dull and dazed. But his love of nature was as strong

as his love of books. He is fond of dwelling on the beauties of the spring-time in the country.

" Herkneþ these blisful briddēs how they syngē,
And æth the fresschē floures how they springe!"

he bids us on a bright April morn. And more fully describes his own feelings in the "Legend of Good Women."

" And as for me, though that I konne but lyte,
On bokēs for to rede I me delyte,
And to hem give I feyth and ful credencē,
And in myn herte have hem in reverencē
So hertely that there is gamē noon
That fro my bokēs maketh me to goon,
But yt be seldom on the holy day,
Save certeynly whan that the monethe of May
Is comen, and that I here the foulēs syngē,
And that the floures gynnen for to sprynge,
Faire wel my boke, and my devocioun!"

He was thoroughly English, one of the educated middle class, the class to which England owes so much; he had by his connection with court acquired the refinement and culture of the best French and Italian society, without rising above or severing himself from the people to whom he belonged. He could appreciate genuine worth in squire or ploughman, purity and courtesy whether in knight or in the poor country parson. All were his fellowmen, and he sympathized with all. He had known every change of fortune, of wealth and want, and his poetry often reflects his state for the time being; but even in his old age, when poor, infirm, and alone, his irrepressible buoyancy of spirits did not desert him.

Freshness and simplicity of style, roguish humour, quaint fun, hearty praise of what is good and true, kindly ridicule of weakness and foibles, and earnest denunciation of injustice and oppression, are among his most marked characteristics.

ESSAY ON THE LANGUAGE OF CHAUCER.

The age of Chaucer marks an epoch in the history of our language, when what is called the New English arose from the complete fusion of the Norman French with the speech of the common people.

So long as our kings retained their continental possessions, and our nobles ruled England as a conquered country, looking to Normandy, Picardy, and Anjou as their fatherland, whence they continually recruited their numbers, the union of the races was impossible; but with the final loss of Normandy by King John in 1204 the relations of the two countries were changed, and in the reign of Edward I. and Edward III. the Norman barons were compelled by circumstances to consider this their home, and France a land to be reconquered by the arms of their English fellow-citizens and subjects. The change of sentiment required, however, time for its completion. For two or three generations the nobles felt themselves a superior race and clung to their own language, disdaining to adopt one which they had been accustomed to look on as fit only for "villans and burghers." Though they could not abstain from intercourse with the common people, the separation of language persisted, and served to mark the man of rank from the plebeian.

In the metrical chronicle of Robert of Gloucester, which from internal evidence must have been written later than A.D. 1280, and is referred by Mr. K. Oliphant to about A.D. 1300, it is plainly asserted, that to speak French was in his time considered a mark of good breeding:

"Vor bote a man couthe French me tolth of hym wel lute,
Ac lowe men holdeth to Engliiss, and to her owe speche yute;
Ich wene ther ne be man in world contreyes none
That ne holdeth to her kunde speche bote Engeland one;
Ac wel me wot vor to conne bothe wel yt ys,
Vor the more that a man can the more worthe he is."

[For unless a man know French one thinks but little of him,
But low men hold to English, and to their own speech well;

I believe there are no men in the countries of the world
 That do not hold to their native speech but England only;
 But well I know that it is well to understand both,
 For the more that a man knows the more worth (able) he is.]

The blending of the languages began with the fourteenth century. The ballads of Lawrence Minot, composed probably at intervals between 1330 and 1360, and the "Vision of Piers Plowman," which seems to have been written soon after 1365, contain an infusion of French words; but the effects of the complete coalescence of the two peoples, and the impulse it gave to the development of the common language, are to be seen in the poems of Gower and his friend Chaucer, which belong to the latter part of the fourteenth century. The translation of the Bible into English by Wycliffe at the same time served to raise the literary character and to fix the grammatical forms of the language, which had been passing through a period of rapid changes.

The old system of inflexions had been undergoing a process of disintegration, the several endings in *e*, *a*, *en*, and *an*, by which cases and numbers, moods and adverbs, had hitherto been distinguished, were fast being for the most part replaced by the single form of *e*, partly as a result of a law in every language that words become worn down by use, like pebbles in a water-course smoothed and rounded by friction,—a change which proceeds most rapidly in the absence of a written literature, and tends to convert synthetic or inflected into analytic or uninflected languages; and partly in obedience to a law less general, only because its conditions are not universal, viz. that when two races speaking different languages are merged into one, they, though freely using one another's words, being unable to agree as to their inflections, end by discarding such syllables altogether so far as can be done without loss of perspicuity.

To this law may be referred the triumph of the plural sign *s* or *es* over *en* or *an*, since French and English found themselves here at least at one, and the same may be said of the prefixes *un* and *in*, and the suffixes *able* and *ible*.

This detrition of inflexions, as we may call it, culminated in the Elizabethan era in the almost total loss of the final *e*, before the expedients for distinguishing infinitives from participles, adverbs from adjectives, &c., had been reduced to rule. Its loss becomes a stumbling-block to readers of Shakespeare and his contemporaries scarcely less grievous than its retention does to those of Chaucer, appearing in the guise of inexplicable anomalies, and of seeming

violations of the most ordinary grammatical rules, which have been laboriously cleared up by Dr. Abbott in his admirable *Shakespearian Grammar*.

But though the new English had fairly established itself as a national and literary language it was still in a state of rapid growth and development, destined to undergo considerable changes in grammar, and even more in orthography, ere it settled down into the form which it has retained without any material alteration from the time of the Stuarts to the present day.

When Chaucer wrote printing was not yet invented; a number of scribes, whose attainments did not perhaps go beyond the mere mechanical art of writing, were accustomed to work together while one read aloud the book to be copied, and each spelling as he was in the habit of pronouncing, and probably not seldom misapprehending the meaning of the author, it was inevitable that countless variations should arise in the text, some representing the sound of the spoken word, others the changes which had taken place in the pronunciation between the dates of the original MS. and the particular copy, and others still such clerical blunders as are even now familiar to every one who has had to correct the proofs of any literary work.

After the sixteenth century, when our language had become stereotyped as it were in grammar and orthography, various attempts were made to modernize the spelling of so popular a poet as Chaucer so as to make him intelligible to ordinary readers, but with the most unhappy results; the men who undertook the task being almost entirely ignorant of the essential features of the language of the original work.

With a prose writer the consequences might not have been more serious than the loss to posterity of an invaluable philological landmark; but where metre and rime were involved, the result has been the entire destruction of all that constitutes the outward form of poetry; while by the subsequent attempts of editors to restore to the mangled verses something like metrical rhythm, the language itself has been wrested and corrupted to an extent which would have rendered hopeless all idea of its restoration, were it not that in the Harleian MS. 7334 we possess a copy executed by a competent hand very shortly after the author's death, and though not free from clerical errors, on the whole remarkably correct. The late learned antiquary Mr. Thomas Wright adopted it in his edition, with a few emendations; but since the publication by Mr. F. T. Furnivall of his six-text edition of Chaucer we have the

means of collating it with the Ellesmere, Hengwrt, Corpus, Lansdowne, Petworth, and Cambridge MSS. Dr. Morris has availed himself of the first three in his edition of the "Prologue, the Knights and the Nonnes Tales" (Clarendon Press Series); but though he has consulted the last three also in cases of difficulty, he has found them of little real use.

Chaucer himself seems to have had forebodings of the mutilations which were to befall his works, having already suffered from the negligence of his amanuensis, for in the closing stanzas of his "Troilus and Cressida," he says,

"Go litel booke, go litel tragedie,
And for ther is so grete diversite
In Englisch and in writing of our tong.
So pray I God that non miswritë thee,
Ne thee mismetre for defaut of tong.
And rede wherso thou be or eles song
That thou be understand."

And in language more forcible than elegant he imprecates a curse on this unlucky man—

"Adam Scrivener, if evere it thee bifal
Boece or Troilus for to writë new,
Under thy long lokkes maist thou have the scall,
But after my making thou write more trew.
So ofte a day I mote thy werke renew,
It to correct and eke to rubbe and scrape,
And al is thorow thy negligence and rape."

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO THE TIME OF CHAUCER.

The term Anglo-Saxon, which is currently used to designate the language supposed to have been spoken by our forefathers before the Norman Conquest, is an invention of modern times, and has not even the advantage of convenience to recommend it.

It was not until the close of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century, when the fusion of races was followed by the rise of a truly national spirit and an outburst of literary activity, that a national language had any existence. The greater part of the thirteenth century was a period of dearth and degradation, a

dark age to the student and lover of our glorious tongue. What little was written was in Latin or French, English being considered not only by the proud nobles, but unhappily also by a pedantic priesthood, as unworthy of cultivation, and consequently, being relegated to the ignorant peasantry, it suffered the loss of thousands of good old words. Hitherto the clergy had written in the language of the people to whom they belonged, and had produced many works of great literary merit. These, however, may be easily recognized as belonging to two great dialectic divisions—a north-eastern and south-western, besides minor subdivisions. The great sundering line may roughly be drawn from Shrewsbury through Northampton and Bedford to Colchester, and represents the original partition of the country between the Angles and the Saxons. On the former fell the full force of the Danish invasions, and as we go further north we find the proportion of Scandinavian words and forms to increase.

In the earliest times these languages were almost as distinct as High German and Low German (Platt Deutsch), and the so-called Anglo-Saxon dictionaries confound and mingle the two without distinction. The infusion of Danish or Norse into the Anglian led naturally to a clipping and paring down of inflections, a feature common to all mixed languages; whereas the speech of Wessex, the kingdom of Alfred, preserved much longer its rich inflectional character. Yet even these south-western people seem to have called themselves English rather than Saxons. At any rate King Alfred tells us that his people called their speech English, and Robert of Gloucester says of English, "The Saxones speche yt was, and thorw hem ycome yt ys." Bede, an Angle, calls them Saxons, but the word is of rare occurrence before the thirteenth century. Procopius in the sixth century calls them Frisians.

It is, however, from the East Midland chiefly that the new English arose, where the monks of Peterborough compiled the history of England in English, in chronicles which were copied and scattered throughout the land. Their dialect incorporating all that was good from the others laid the foundation of that literary language which, again taking up a large French element, was destined to become the speech of the nation at large.

Early in the fourteenth century Robert of Brunne, called also Robert Manning, living in Rutland, in the same linguistic province as the monks of Peterborough, wrote *The Handlyng Synne*, which marks an era in the history of our language and literature. In it

may be seen actually or foreshadowed every feature of language, idiom, and grammar which distinguishes the English of to-day from that of King Alfred and from the Teutonic languages of the Continent. His English is no longer inflectional but analytic, the difference being one of kind not of degree merely, as was the case in the Old Anglian when compared with the speech of the West Saxons. Of the language of *The Handlyng Synne* we may say as Sir Philip Sidney did of the Elizabethan age, "English is void of those cumbersome differences of cases, genders, moods, and tenses, which I think was a piece of the Tower of Babylon's curse, that a man should be put to schoole to learne his mother tongue; but for the uttering sweetly and properly the conceit of the minde, which is the ende of speech, that it hath equally with any other tongue in the world."

Of scarcely less value as marking another feature of our present language is the *Ancoren Riwele*, written about 1220 by a learned prelate, into which French and Latin words are imported wholesale. Chaucer has been accused of corrupting our language; but if we compare his works with the *Ancoren Riwele*, written a century and a half earlier, we shall find that the affectation of French words and idioms by the author of the *Riwele*, an example which for nearly a hundred years none had dared to follow, puts Chaucer rather in the light of a restorer of our language, and justifies Spenser's description of him as "a well of English undefiled." He did not affect a retrograde course, but endeavoured to develop the new powers which English had acquired from this "happy marriage," the fruit of which has been described by none in more glowing terms than by the profound German scholar Grimm. "None of the modern languages has through the very loss and decay of all phonetic laws, and through the dropping of nearly all inflections, acquired greater force and vigour than the English, and from the fulness of those vague and indefinite sounds which may be learned but can never be taught it has derived a power of expression such as has never been at the command of any human tongue. Begotten by a surprising union of the two noblest languages of Europe, the one Teutonic, the other Romanic, it received that wonderfully happy temper and thorough breeding, where the Teutonic supplied the material strength, the Romanic the suppleness and freedom of expression. . . . In wealth, in wisdom, and strict economy, none of the living languages can vie with it." Such being the character of the language in which Chaucer wrote, it is not necessary to give in

detail the grammatical forms and inflections of the older English dialects.

It will be sufficient to indicate such as were still in use, but have been subsequently dropped or so worn down as to be no longer easily recognized, and to show at the same time how these are modified by the necessities of metrical composition, so as to be lost to the ear though properly retained in the orthography, in accordance with rules of prosody not unlike those familiar to readers of Latin and French poetry, and which held their ground more or less in English down to the time of Milton.

The use of the final *e* in the language of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries presents the greatest difficulty to all who are unacquainted with the grammatical construction of the early and middle English. It was not, as it now is, a merely conventional sign for marking the long sound of the preceding vowel, as in the modern words *bār* and *bāre*, for which purpose it is indifferent whether it is placed at the end of the syllable or immediately before the vowel to be lengthened, as in *bāre* or *beār*, *sēre* or *seēr*; nor was it, as in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, inserted or omitted at the whim of the writer or convenience of the printer, when we may often see the same word spelled with and without it in the same or consecutive lines; nor was it, as in the artificial would-be antiquated diction of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, employed without any certain rule either as "an aping of the ancients," as Ben Jonson called it, or for lengthening out the line to the number of syllables required by the peculiar metre borrowed from the Italian poets, and to which the more rigid English tongue would otherwise have refused to bend; but it was a real grammatical inflection, marking case and number, distinguishing adverbs from the corresponding adjectives, and in certain verbs of the "strong" form representing the *-en* of the older plural, e.g. *he spak*, *thei spake*, for *spaken*, like the German *er sprach*, *sie sprachen*; so that to write, as the modernized texts have it, *he spake*, would be a blunder as gross as the converse *they speaks* would be now, and to pronounce *they spake* as we do is to rob the line of a syllable and the verse of its rhythm and metre, and, if the word be at the end, it may be of its rime, as for instance where the indirect objective cases *timé* and *Romé* rime with *by me* and *to me*.

The following summary of the peculiar features of Chaucer's grammar is founded on the essay of Prof. Child, and Dr. Morris' Introduction to his Chaucer's Prologue, &c., mentioned above.

NOUNS.

NUMBER.—1. The plural is mostly formed by adding *-s*, pronounced as a distinct syllable.

"And with his *stremes* dryeth in the *greves*
The silver *dropes* hongyng on the *levés*."

Knights Tale, ll. 637-8.

-s, which has now almost entirely replaced the *-es*, was as a rule used only in words of more than one syllable and in those ending with a liquid, as *palmers*, *pilgrims*, *naciouns*, &c.

Such forms as *bestis*, *othus*, are probably the provincial or dialectical usages of the scribes employed.

2. Some nouns form their plurals in *-en* or *-n* (the *-an* of O.E.), as *asschen*, *been* (bees), *eyghen* (eyes) [Scot. *een*], *flon* (arrows), *schoon* (shoes), [Scot. *shoon*], and *oxen*; *fon* or *foon* (foes), and *kyn*, which remained till the seventeenth century as *kine*.

3. *Brethren*, *children*, with the obsolete *doughtren* and *sistren*, are formed by adding *-n* to an older plural form in O.E. *-e*, A.S. *-u*. The O.E. *childre*, &c., persists as *childer*, &c., in the provincial dialect of the northern counties.

4. *Deer*, *scheep*, *swin* have never had a plural termination; *folk*, *hors*, *night*, *thing*, and *yeer* or *yer* have acquired such only in recent times, the plural in the earlier ages of our language having had the same form as the singular.

5. *Feet*, *men*, *geese*, *teeth* are plurals formed by a vowel change only.

CASE.—1. The possessive case singular is formed by adding *-es* (now mostly *-s*).

"Ful worthi was he in his *loriés* werre." Prol. l. 47.

2. The possessive plural had the same form, *foxés* tales, *mennés* wittes. But when the nominative ended in *-en* it was sometimes unchanged, as "his *eyghen* sight."

3. In O.E. *fader*, brother, *doughter* were uninflected in the possessive case; thus "my *fader* soule," Prol. 781; "*brother* sone," K. T. 2226.

4. Some old feminines of the Saxon 1st declension, which made their possessives in *-an*, had dropped the termination; thus we find *ladyé* grace, *sonné* upriste (rising), *herté* blood, *widewé* sone, and we still speak of *Lady* day and *Lady* bird.

5. The indirect objective (dative) occurs sometimes as a distinct case, and ends in *-e*, as *holité*, *beddē*, &c.

ADJECTIVES

Now uninflected had in early English two forms, the definite and indefinite, the former used after demonstrative adjectives, of which the so-called definite article is one, and possessive pronouns (thus differing from the modern German usage), and the indefinite in all other circumstances. In Saxon each was declined, but in Chaucer the only inflection is found in the definite form which ends in *-ȝ*, as "the *yongȝ* sonne," "his *halfȝ* cours." This *-ȝ* is however generally dropped in words of more than one syllable.

The vocative case of adjectives is distinguished by an *-e*, as "*leevȝ* brother," K. T. 326, "O *strongȝ* God," except in words of French origin, and therefore of recent introduction, as "*gentil* sire."

DEGREES OF COMPARISON.—The comparative is generally formed as now by adding *-er* to the positive. The O.E. termination was *-re*, which is retained in *derre* (dearer), *ferre* (farther), *nerre* (nearer), *sorre* (sorier).

Lenger, *strenger*, and the extant *elder* are examples of inflection together with vowel change.

Bet (bette or better) and *mo* (for more) are contracted forms.

The superlative is made by adding *-este* or *-est* to adjectives and *-est* to adverbs; *hest* (highest), and *next*, extant (nighest), are contractions.

The plural is formed by adding *-ȝ*, not *-es*, "*smallȝ* fowlȝ," Prol. 9; but adjectives of more than one syllable, and all when used predicatively, drop the *-e*. Some French words form the plural in *-es*, as "*places delitables*."

DEMONSTRATIVES.

In O.E. the so-called definite article *the* was in the plural *tho*, a form occasionally, though very rarely, used by Chaucer. The neuter singular was *that*, but except in the phrases "*that* oon" and "*that* other," contracted into *toon* and *tother*, Chaucer never uses *that* otherwise than as we do now.

He frequently employs *tho* for those, as "*tho* wordȝ," and "oon of *tho* that," and he writes the plural of *this* as *thise*, *thes*, or *these* indiscriminately.

Attȝ, a word of very frequent occurrence, is a corruption of the Saxon *at tham*, the old objective, O.E. *attan*, *atta*, masc. and neut., *atter*, fem., "*attȝ* beste," "*attȝ* Bow."

Thilk = the like (A.S. *thyllic*, *thylc*), "*thilk* text," Prol. 182, = that text. *Swich*, Prol. 3, and *sik*, Prol. 245 (A.S. *swylk* = *swa lyk*) = so like, our *such*.

That ilke = the same (A.S. *ilk*). Scotch, "Graham of that *ilk*," i.e. of that same clan or place [must not be confounded with the Scotch *ilka*, A.S. *ælc* = each]. *Same* did not come into use till about the year 1200.

Som . . . *som* = one . . . another.

"He moot ben deed, the kyng as schal a page;
Som in his bed, *som* in the deepē see,
Som in the largē feeld, as men may se."

Knights Tale, 2172-4.

PRONOUNS.

SINGULAR.			PLURAL.	
{	Nom.	I, Ich, Ik,	{	we.
	Poss.	min (myn), mi (my),		our, ours.
	Obj.	me,		us.
{	Nom.	thou (thow),	{	ye.
	Poss.	thin (thyn), thi (thy),		your, yours.
	Obj.	the, thee.		yow, you.

	<i>Masc.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>	<i>Neut.</i>	<i>All Genders.</i>
Nom.	he,	she,	hit, it, yt,	thei, they.
Poss.	his,	hire, hir,	his,	here, her, hir.
Obj.	him,	hire, hir, here,	hit, it, yt,	hem.

Independent or predicative forms are *min* (pl. *mine*); *oure*, *oures*; *thin* (pl. *thine*); *youre*, *youres*; *hire*, *heres* (hers); *here*, *heres* (theirs). The forms *oures* and *youres* were borrowed from the Northern dialect.

Thou is often joined to its verb, as *schaltow*, *woldestow*, Nonne Prestes Tale, 525; *crydestow*, Knights Tale, 225.

The objective (dative) cases of pronouns are used after impersonal verbs, as "*me* mette;" "*him* thoughte;" after some verbs of motion, as "*goth him*;" "*he* rydeth *him*;" and after such words as *wel*, *wo*, *loth*, and *leef*.

Whos (*whose*) and *whom* are the possessive and objective cases of *who*.

Which is joined with *that*, thus, "*Hem whichs that* wepith;" "*His love the which that* he oweth." Alone it sometimes stands for what or what sort of, as—

"Which a miracle ther befel anoon."

Knights Tale, 1817.

"And whiche they weren, and of what degre."

Prol. 40.

What is used for *why* like the Lat. *quid*,

"What schulde he studie and make himselven wood?"

Prol. 184.

That is sometimes used with a personal pronoun along with it, thus—

"A knight ther was, and that a worthi man,

That from the tymē that he first began

To ryden out, *he* lovede chivalrye."

Prol. 43-45.

"Al were they sorē hurt, and namely oon,

That with a spere was thirled *his* brest boon."

Knights Tale, 1851-2.

In the second instance, *that his* = whose.

Who and *who so* are used indefinitely in the same way as our "one says," "As *who* seith," "*Who so* that can him rede," Prol. 741.

Men and the shortened form *me*, which must not be confounded with the objective of *I*, were used from a very early period down to the seventeenth century in the sense of "one," like the German "*man* sagt," &c., and the French "*on* dit," &c. "*Me tolth*" in the passage quoted from Robert of Gloucester (see page 15) is an instance, and one of the latest is to be found in Lodge's *Wits Miserie*.

"And stop *me* (let *one* stop) his dice, you are a villaine."

VERBS.

I. The so-called weak verbs, or those which form the past tense by the addition of the suffix *-ed*, were thus declined:—

Present Tense.

SINGULAR.

1. I lovē,
2. Thou lov-est,
3. He lov-eth,

PLURAL.

- We lov-en or lovē.
Ye lov-en or lovē.
They lov-en or lovē.

Past Tense.

1. I lov-ede,
2. Thou lov-edest,
3. He lov-ede,

- We lov-eden, lov-ede.
You lov-eden, lov-ede.
They lov-eden, lov-ede.

The MSS. of Chaucer's poetical works frequently have *loved*, those of his prose very rarely.

In some, as the Harl. MS., we find *has* for *hast*, *dos* for *dost*, an evidence of the influence of the Northumbrian, in which the 2nd pers. sing. ended in *-es*, and we sometimes meet with the termination *-eth* in the 3rd plur. pres., simulating the singular, owing to the fact of that being the plural inflexion of all three persons in the southern counties = *-ath* in A. Sax.

"And over his heed ther *schyneth* two figures."

Knights Tale, 1185, Harl. MS.

We often find *-th* for *-eth*, as *spekth* for *speketh*.

Saxon verbs whose roots end in *-d*, *-t*, and rarely in *-s*, are contracted in the 3rd sing. pres., as *sit* for *sitteth*, *writ* for *writeth*, *halt* for *holdeth*, *find* for *findeth*, *stont* for *stondeth* (stands), and *rist* for *riseth*.

II. Some verbs of the weak conjugation form the past tense by adding *-dē* or *-tē* instead of *-ede*, as *heren*, *herdē*; *hiden*, *hiddē*; *kepen*, *keptē*; but if the root end in *d* or *t*, preceded by another consonant, *-ē* only is added instead of *-dē* and *-tē*, as *wenden*, *wendē*; *sterten*, *stertē*; *letten* (to hinder), *lettē*.

III. In some verbs forming a link between the weak and strong conjugations we have a change of the vowel root together with the addition of the suffix *-dē* or *-tē*, as *sellen*, *solde*; *tellen*, *tolde*; *seche* (to seek), *soughte*; and others in which modern English has abandoned the vowel change, as *delen*, *daltē* (dealt); *leden*, *laddē* (led); *leven*, *lafiē* (left).

THE STRONG VERBS

Are those which form the past tense by merely changing the root vowel, as *sterren*, to die, *starf*, and the past part. by the addition of *-en* or *-ē*, besides a vowel change which may or may not be the same as in the past tense, as *storven* or *storvē* (O.E. *ystorren*). Cf. Ger. *sterben*, *starb*, *gestorben*.

The 1st and 3rd persons singular of the past tense had no final *e*, as printed in some modern editions; the three persons plural ended in *-en* or *-ē*, and the 2nd person singular in *-ē*, frequently dropped, or occasionally in *-est*.

Some strong verbs had two forms for the past tense, one simple and the other taking the suffix of weak verbs—

Present.

Weep,

Creep,

Past.

wep or weptē.

crep or creptē.

A number of the older verbs of this conjugation, in which the root vowel of the past participle was not the same as that of the past tense, employed it in the plural of the latter thus—

Sterven, past sing. *starf*, p. plur. *storven*; p. part. (y)*storven*.

Riden, „ *rood* or *rod*, „ *riden*; „ (y)*riden*.

Smiten, „ *smoot*; „ *smiten*; „ (y)*smiten*.

This difference between the numbers was soon lost.

SUBJUNCTIVE.

The present singular ends in *-e*, the plural in *-en*; the past singular in *-ede*, *-de*, or *-te*, the plural in *-eden*, *-den*, or *-ten*, in all the persons; except in a few such forms as *speke* we, *go* we.

IMPERATIVE.

The only inflections are an *-eth*, or occasionally an *-e* in the 2nd pers. plural; and in verbs conjugated like *tellen* and *loven*, an *-e* in the singular also.

THE INFINITIVE.

Originally the infinitive ended in *-en* (the Saxon *-an*), but the *-n* was often dropped, leaving an *-e* only, a change which began in the south.

The so-called gerund, really the objective (dative) case of the infinitive, and known by being preceded by *to*, in the sense of “for the purpose of,” “in order to,” &c., was formed from the former by adding *-e*, and must not in its full or contracted forms be confounded with the infinitive.

Ex. *to doon-e* = *to don-ne*. In Prol. 134, “no ferthing *sene*” = *for to senne*. In l. 720, “*for to telle*” is the gerund also, but the *-n* has been discarded.

The present participle usually ends in *-yng*, or *-ynge* when the rime demands it. Originally the participle ended in *-inde* or *-ind* in the south, *-ande* or *-and* (occasionally met with in Chaucer) in the north, both forms being employed in the east midland.

Verbal nouns were formed by the termination *-ung* or later *-ing*,

and then the participles were assimilated to them by changing *-inde* and *-ind* into *-ynge*, *-yng*, or *-ing*, as in our present language.

The infinitive in *-an* or *-en* was also under certain circumstances reduced to the same termination *-ing*, and the several forms co-existing in our language present much difficulty to students.

The past participle of weak verbs ends in *-ed* or *-d*, or occasionally in *-et* or *-t*; of strong verbs in *-en* or *-e*, with change of the root vowel in some, and they are all sometimes preceded by the old prefix *y-*, *i-* (A.S. *ge-*), as *i-ronne*, *i-falle*, *y-clept*.

ANOMALOUS VERBS.

Those whose inflexions cannot be brought under any rule, some of which are defective, and others, as *to go*, whose wanting parts are made up by borrowing the corresponding members of others, are the truly *irregular* verbs. This name has also been most unhappily given by grammarians trained in the schools of Greek and Latin to those of the strong conjugation because they are the most removed from the inflectional systems of those languages; whereas they are the most characteristic of the Teutonic family, and in that sense the more regular. Words taken from the Latin are thus instinctively in every instance referred to the weak conjugation as the less peculiarly Teutonic of the two.

1. *Ben*, *been*, to be; 1st sing. pres. ind. *am*; 2nd, *art*; 3rd, *is*; plur. *been*, *aren*, *are*; past, *was*, *wast*, *was*, and *were*; imp. sing. *be*, pl. *beth*; p. part. *ben*, *been*.

This, the "verb substantive," is in fact made up of portions of three distinct verbs, which long coexisted in different dialects or even in the same so late as the seventeenth century, as may be seen in the A.V. of the Bible and in Milton, and to this day among the peasantry.

2. *Conne*, to know or to be able; pres. ind., 1st, *can*; 2nd, *can* or *canst*; 3rd, *can*; pl. *connen*, *conne*; past, 1st and 3rd, *couth*, *cowthe*, *cowde*; p.p. *couth*, *coud*. The *l* in the modern word has been inserted through a false analogy with *would* and *should*.

3. *Darren*, *dare*; pres. ind., *dar*, *darst*, *där*; pl. *dar*, *dorre*; past, *dorate*, *durste*.

4. *May*; pres. ind. sing., 1st and 3rd, *may*, *mow*; 2nd, *mayst* or *maist*; pl. *moven*, *mowe*; pres. subj. *mowe*; past tense, 1st and 3rd, *might*, *moghte*.

5. *Mot*, *must*, *may*; ind. pres. sing., 1st and 3rd, *mot*, *moot*; 2nd *must*, *moot*; pl. *mooten*, *moote*; past tense, *moste*.

6. *Owen*, to owe (moral obligation); pres. *oweth*; past, *oughte*, *aughte*; pl. *oughten*, *oughte*.

7. *Schal*, shall (compulsion); pres. ind. sing., 1st and 3rd, *schal*; 2nd, *schalt*; pl. *schullen*, *schuln*, *schul*; past, *schulde*, *scholde*.

8. *Thar*, need (Ger. *dürfen*); pres. ind. sing. *thar*; past, *thurte*; subj. 3rd, *ther*.

9. *Witen*, to know; pres. ind. sing., 1st and 3rd, *wat*, *wot*; 2nd, *wost*; pl. *witen*, *wite*, *woote*; past, *wiste*.

10. *Wil*, will; pres. ind. sing., 1st, *wille*, *wil*, *wolle*, *wol*; 2nd, *wilt*, *wolt*; 3rd, *wile*, *wole*, *wol*; pl. *woln*, *willen*, *wille*; past, *wolde*.

It has the full meaning of the Latin *volo*, e.g. "Owre swete Lord of heven, that no man *wil perische*" (i.e. *neminem vult perdere*), *Persones Tale*.

NEGATIVE VERBS.

Nam = am not.

Nylle, *nyl* = will not.

Nys = is not.

Nolde = would not.

Nas = was not.

Nat, *not*, *noot* = knows not.

Nere = were not.

Nost = knowest not.

Nath = hath not.

Nyste, *nysten* = knew not.

Nadde, *nade* = had not.

ADVERBS.

1. Adverbs are formed from adjectives by adding *-ŷ* to the latter, as *brightŷ*, brightly; *deepŷ*, deeply; *lowŷ*, lowly. This is the explanation of the seeming use of the adjective for the adverb in modern English, and which is called by some grammarians the "flat adverb."

2. Others are formed as now by adding *-lyche* or *-ly*, as *shortly*, *rudelyche*, *pleynly*.

3. And a few have *e* before the *-ly*, as *boldŷly*, *trewŷly*, *softŷly*.

4. Some end in *-en* or *-e*, as *aboven*, *abovē*; *abouten*, *aboutē*; *withouten*, *withoutē*; *siththen*, *siththē*, since. Many have dropped the *-n*, retaining the *-e* only, as *asondre*, *behyndē*, *bynethē*, *biyondē*, *bytwenē*, *hennē* (hence), *thennē* (thence), *oftē* in Chaucer, though *often* is the more usual form at present, *seldŷ* (seldom), *soonē*.

5. Adverbs in *-es*: *needes*, needs; *ones*, once; *twies* or *twie*, twice; *thries*, *thrie*, thrice; *unnethes*, scarcely; *whiles*, *bysides*, *togideres*; *hennes*, hence; *thennes*, thence; *whennes*, whence; *agaynes*, *ayens*, against; *amonges*, among, amongst; *amyddes*, amidst.

6. *Of-newŷ*, anew, newly (cf. *of yore*, *of late*); *as-now*, at present;

on *sleep*, asleep (fell on *sleep*, A.V. Acts xiii. 36) (cf. on *honting*, a hunting, &c.).

7. *There* and *then* occasionally stand for *where* and *when*.

8. *As*, used before *in*, *to*, *for*, *by*, = considering, with respect to, so far as concerns.

"As in so litel space." Prol. 87.

As is used before the imperative in supplicatory phrases—

"As keep me fro thi vengeaunce and thin yre." K. T. 1444.

"As sende love and pees betwixe hem two." K. T. 1459.

(Cf. use of *que* in French.)

9. *But*, only (be-out) takes a negative before it. "I *nam but* deed." K. T. 416. Cf. again the French, "Je ne suis *que* . . ."

10. Two or more negatives do not make an affirmative. This is the usage of the A.S., and still holds its ground among "uneducated" persons.

"He *nevere* yit *no* vileinye *ne* sayde
In al his lyf unto *no* maner wight." Prol. 70, 71.

PREPOSITIONS.

Occasionally *til* = to (cf. the German *bis*), *unto* = until, *up* = upon, and *uppon* = on.

CONJUNCTIONS.

Ne . . . *ne* = neither . . . nor; *other* . . . *other* = either . . . or (cf. Ger. *oder*); *what* . . . *and* = both . . . and.

THE FINAL E.

The use and meaning of the final *e* in the several parts of speech may be thus summed up.

In many nouns and adjectives it represents the Anglo-Saxon terminations in *-a*, *-e*, or *-u*, and is then always sounded: *assē* and *cuppē* = A.S. *assa* and *cuppa*; *hertē* and *marē* = A.S. *heorte* and *mare*; *halē* and *wodē* = A.S. *healu* and *wudu*; *derē* and *dryē* = A.S. *deore* and *dryge*.

It is sounded when it stands as the sign of the objective indirect (or dative) case, as *rootē*, *breethē*, *heathē* (Prol. 2, 5, 6), and in *beddē* and *briggē*, from *bed* and *brig*.

It is sounded when it marks—

(a) The definite form of the adjective, "the *yongē sonne*." Prol. 7.

(b) The plural of adjectives, "*smalē fowles*." Prol. 9.

(c) The vocative of adjectives, "O *strongē god!*" K. T. 1515.

In verbs it is sounded when it represents the older termination *-en* or *-an* as a sign of—

(a) The infinitive, as to "*seekē, tellē*." Prol. 17, 38.

(b) The "gerund," as "*senē*." Prol. 134.

(c) The past participle, as "*i-ronnē, i-fallē*." Prol. 8, 25.

(d) And in the past tenses of weak verbs in *-de* or *-te*, as *wentē, coudē, woldē, feddē, weptē*.

It is sounded in adverbs where it—

(a) Represents older vowel-endings, as *sonē, twiē, thriē*.

(b) Marks the adverb from the corresponding adjective, as *fairē, rightē* = fairly, rightly.

(c) When it stands for the O.E. *-en*, A.S. *an*: *aboutē, abovē*, O.E. *abouten*, *aboven*, A.S. *abutan*, *abufan*.

(d) When followed by *-ly* in the double adverbial ending *-ēly*, as *hertēly, lustēly, semēly, trewēly*.

It is silent in the past tenses of weak verbs in *-ede*, = *ed*, as *lovede*. Prol. 97.

It is mostly silent in—

(a) The personal pronouns *oure, youre, hire, here*.

(b) And in many words of more than two syllables.

The final unaccented *e* in words of French origin is generally silent, but often sounded as in French verse. The scanning of each particular line must decide.

VERSIFICATION.

The poetry of the Greeks and Romans was purely metrical. In their languages the distinction between long and short vowels was strongly marked, and the lines were composed of a definite number of feet, the feet consisting of two or more syllables long or short following one another in a regular order. Rimes when they occurred accidentally were looked on as faults.

In the later and debased age of the Latin language, when the pronunciation became corrupted, the regular metres gave way to verses composed of a fixed number of syllables, guided by accent rather than quantity, and with rimes in regular order.

This form of versification first appears in the later Latin hymns of the Western Church, and was adopted from the first in the poetry of the Romance languages.

Quite different was the verse employed by the early Germanic and Scandinavian poets, its distinctive feature being alliteration. Two more or less emphatic words in the first, and one in the second line of each couplet began with the same consonant.

In the north and west of England the alliterative verse held its ground so late as the fifteenth century, but in the southern and eastern shires the riming verse was employed in the thirteenth.

The *Vision of Piers Plowman* (A.D. 1362) is a good example of alliterative verse.

" I was *weori* of *wandrings*,
And *went* me to *reste*
Under a *brod banke*
Bi a *bourne* syde.
And as I *lay* and *leonede*
And *lokede* on the *watres*,
I *slumberde* in a *sleepynge*,
Hit *sownede* so *murie*."

In this extract the words in italics constitute the alliteration, the others, as *was* in the first, *Bi* in the fourth, and *so* in the last, are unemphatic, and contain the characteristic letter of each couplet only by accident.

Chaucer, a man of general culture, living in the south-eastern counties, and familiar with the poetry of Italy and France, naturally chose the metrical and riming style of verse.

His *Canterbury Tales* (except those of Melibeus and the Persone, which are in prose) are written in what is commonly called the heroic couplet. The lines consist of ten syllables, of which the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth are accented, or as the classical scholar would express it, they consist of five iambs. Very often, oftener indeed than is noticed by the ordinary reader, there is an eleventh and unaccented syllable at the end, the verse being then identical with iambic trimeter catalectic of the Greek and Latin poets; and far more rarely there are but nine syllables, an unaccented odd syllable beginning the line, and followed by four iambs.

To take a few unequivocal examples from the Prologue. The typical verse is seen in ll. 19, 20—

Byfel | that in | that se | soun on | a day,
In South | werk at | the Tab | ard as | I lay.

The verse of eleven syllables in ll. 11, 12—

So prik | eth hem | nature | in here | corag | es,
Thanne long | en folk | to gon | on pil | grimag | es.

And that of nine in l. 391—

In | a gowne | of fal | dyng to | the kne.

The opening couplet, though generally read as decasyllabic, is really composed of eleven, as will be seen by a reference to the grammar of Chaucer—

Whan that | April | lê with | his schow | res swoot | è,
The drought | of Marche | hath per | ced to | the root | è.

The word *nonè*, our *nonce*, must be read as a dissyllable in l. 523, or it would not rime with *non is* in that following, and in ll. 21, 22, *pilgrimagè* and *coragè* are probably to be read as in French poetry, the third syllable lightly sounded. So in the Parson's Prologue, l. 17, 345, Wright's ed.—

"Do you | plesaun | cè le | ful as | I can."

Short unemphatic syllables are often slurred over, or two such consecutive syllables pronounced almost as one. These contractions may be arranged under several distinct heads.

1. That which has entered so largely into our spoken language, by which *wandering* and *wanderer* are pronounced *wand'ring* and *wand'rer*, *camest* as *cam'st*, &c.

2. The synaesthesia of classic prosodists, or elision of a final vowel before another word beginning with a vowel or a silent *h*. This was far more frequent in our early poetry than is generally known, and often practised by Milton in his *Paradise Lost*.

3. A method of obliterating a short syllable which is of very common occurrence in Chaucer, though, as it seems to me, inadequately explained even by Dr. Morris and other equally eminent commentators. *The final consonant of a word ending with a short syllable is in reading to be attached to the initial vowel of the next.* It will be observed that in the great majority of contractions the following word begins with a vowel giving a clue to the proper reading.

Examples of the first are—

"And *thinketh* | here *cometh* | my mor | tel en | emy." K. T. 785.

"Sche gad | *ereth* flour | es par | ty white | and rede." K. T. 195.

"*Schuln* the | declar | en, or | that thou | go henne." K. T. 1498.

Of the second or synalæpha are—

"And cer | tes lord | *to abi* | den your presence." K. T. 60.

"What schulde | he stud | *ie and* make | himsel | ven wood." Prol. 184.

Besides countless elisions of the terminal *e* which would have been sounded had the next word begun with a consonant.

Synæresis, or the blending of two vowels in the middle of a word, is seen in—

"Ne stud | *ieth* nat; | ley hand | to ev | ery man." Prol. 841.

Where *every* is also contracted after the first method into two syllables.

It is scarcely possible to scan a dozen lines without meeting an instance of the third mode of contraction, but a few examples may be given here—

"And forth | we *ride* | *n a* lit | el more | than pass." Prol. 819.

"And won | derly | *delyve* | *r and* gret | of strengthe." Prol. 84.

"As an | y rav | ens *fethe* | *r it* schon | for blak." K. T. 1286.

"A man | to light | a *cande* | *l at* his | lanterne."

Cant. Tales, l. 5961, Wright's edition.

"And though | that I | no *wepe* | *n have* in | this place." K. T. 733.

Thou schul | dest *neve* | *re out* of | this grov | e pace." K. T. 744.

Whether is frequently sounded as a single syllable, and is sometimes written *wher*.

"I not | *whether* sche | be wom | man or | godesse." K. T. 243.

"Ne rec | cheth nev | ere wher | I synke | or fleete." K. T. 1539.

Words borrowed from the French ending in *-le* or *-re* are pronounced as in that language, with the final *e* mute: *table*, *temple*, *miracle*, *noble*, *propre*, *chapitre*, as *tabl'*, *templ'*, *miracl'*, *nobl'*, *propr'*, *chapitr'*; and those of more than one syllable ending in *-ance* (*-aunce*), *-ence*, *-oun*, *-ie* (*-ige*), *-er*, *-ere*, *-age*, *-une*, *-ure*, and *-lle*, are generally accented on the last syllable (not counting the silent *e*), as *acquyntaunce*, *resoûn*, *manère*, *avauntâge*, &c.; but occasionally the accent is thrown back as in modern English, e.g. *bataille*, K. T.

21; *mdner*, Prol. 71; *fórtune*, each of these words being elsewhere accented on the last syllable. Even some purely English words exhibit the same variety, as *hóntyng* and *húntyng*. K. T. 821 and 1450.

The *-ed* of past participles and the *-ede* of past tenses are to be alike pronounced as a distinct syllable, *-ed*; thus *percēd*, Prol. l. 2, has two syllables, *entunēd*, l. 123, *y-pinchēd*, l. 151, have three, but *lovede*, l. 97, and similar forms, are to be sounded *lov-ēd*, &c., with two, not three syllables.

The initial *h* in the several cases of the pronoun *he*, in the tenses of the verb *to have*, and in the word *how*, is so lightly sounded as to admit of the elision of a final *-e* before it.

"Wel cowde he dresse his takel yemanly." Prol. 103.

Both *e*'s would otherwise be sounded.

In all other words the initial *h* is too strongly aspirated to permit of this.

Not only is the negative *ne* frequently shortened into an initial *n*-before *am*, *is*, *hadde*, [*nadde*], *wot*, [*not*], &c., but we meet with such contractions as *thass* for *the asse*, *tabiden* for *to abiden*, &c. This may be merely due to the scribes. Cf. Prol. 450, where we have the elision in reading though not in the text.

The metrical analysis of the first eighteen lines of the Prologue, given in p. 37, will be found to illustrate most of the foregoing rules of prosody, and will serve as a guide to the correct scanning of Chaucer's verse, which when read as it should be will be found as smooth and regular in its rhythm as any of the present day.

In order to mark the pronunciation without deviating from the orthography of the best MSS. I have in this passage, as in the text generally, adopted the following simple devices and signs.

The final *e* when naturally silent, or when, as in the words *he*, *the*, &c., there can be no doubt as to its pronunciation, is printed in small romans; when, on the other hand, it is to be sounded where it is either silent or omitted in modern English, it is distinguished thus *-ē*; and where an *e* which would be sounded under other circumstances is elided before a word beginning with a vowel or lightly aspirated *h*, it will be found in italics.

Other vowels likewise when elided, whether by synalœpha or by any of the contractions explained above, are marked by italics.

If at the same time it be borne in mind that the finals *-es*, *-en*, and

-ed, being *Saxon* inflections, are, unless the contrary be indicated as above, to be sounded as distinct syllables, and that the -ede of the past tense is to be pronounced -ed, and that, with the exception of the few nine-syllabled verses, every line is either a perfect or a catalectic iambic, a little practice will enable the student to scan the poetry of Chaucer with ease.

A very few irregular contractions, either poetic licenses or anticipations of future pronunciations, may be found, as in Prol. 463. where "*thries hadde*" must be read as our "*thrice had.*"

"And thries | hadde sche | ben at | Jeru | salem."

I will conclude this section with a slightly altered transcription of Dr. Morris' remarks on the pronunciation and scanning of the passage on p. 37.

1. The final *e* in *Aprille* is sounded; but it is silent in the French words *veyne*, *vertue*, and *nature*, and in *Marche*, *holte*, and *kouth*, because followed here by a vowel or lightly aspirated *h*.

2. The final *e* in *swoote*, *smale*, *straunge*, *fe.ne*, and *seeke* (in the last line) is sounded, as the sign of the plural.

3. The final *e* in *roote*, *breethe*, *heethe* is sounded, as the sign of the objective (indirect) case.

4. The final *e* in *swete*, *yonge*, *halfe* is sounded, as the definite form of the adjective.

5. The final *e* in *sonne*, *ende* is sounded, as representing older terminations.

6. The final *e* in *i-ronne* is sounded, as representing the old and fuller ending of the past participle -en (*y-ronnen*).

7. The final *e* in *wende* is sounded, as representing the -en of the plural.

8. And in *seeke* (l. 17), as the -en of the older infinitive.

7a. The full forms of the plural are found in *slepen*, *maken*, *longen*, and

8a. Of the infinitive in *seeken*, in all of which it is of course sounded.

9. The final -es in *schowres*, *croppes*, *fowles*, *halwes*, *strondes*, *londes*, is sounded as the inflexion of the plural; and

10. In *schires* as that of the possessive case.

11. *Vertue*, *licour*, *nature*, and *corages* are accented on the last syllable of the root, as being French words of comparatively recent introduction into English.

- Whan that | April | lē with | his schow | res swoot | ē
 The drought | of Marche | hath per | ced to | the root | ē,
 And bath | ed eve | ry veyne | in swich | licour,
 Of which | vertue | engen | dred is | the flour;
 5 Whan Ze | phirus | eke with | his swe | tē breeth | ē
 Enspir | ed hath | in eve | ry holte | and heeth | ē
 The ten | dre crop | pes, and | the yong | ē sonn | ē
 Hath in | the Ram | his hal | fē cours | i-ron | nē,
 And smal | ē fowl | es mak | en mel | odi-e
 10 That sle | pen al | the night | with o | pen eye,
 So prik | eth hem | nature | in here | corag | es:—
 Thanne long | en folk | to gon | on pil | grimag | es,
 And palm | ers for | to seek | en straung | ē strond | es
 To fer | ne hal | wes, kouthe | in son | dry lond | es;
 15 And spe | cially, | from eve | ry schi | res end | ē
 Of Eng | elond, | to Caunt | erbury | they wend | ē,
 The ho | ly blis | ful mar | tīr for | to seek | ē,
 That hem | hath hol | pen whan | that they | were seek | ē.

THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE PROLOGUE.

WHAN that Aprillē with his schowrēs swootē
The drougt of Marche hath perced to the rootē,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertue engendred is the flour ;—
Whan Zephirus eek with his swetē breethē 5
Enspired hath in every holte and heethē
The tendre croppēs, and the yongē sonnē
Hath in the Ram his halfē cours i-ronnē,

1. *Swoote*.—*Swoot* and *swet* (line 5) are the old forms of *sweet*; the final *e* is here the sign of the plural, in line 5 of the definite.
2. *Perced* = pierced; the pronunciation long outlasted the spelling. Milton, *L'Allegro*, 137-8, makes *pierce* rime with *verse*.
3. *Swich* = such, from *swa* = so, and *lic* = like.
4. *Vertue*.—The Fr. equivalent of the Eng. *might*, power. *Of*, like the Fr. *de*, means from or by. The sense is "By which virtue or power, viz. the sunshine and showers of spring, the flowers are engendered or produced." Cf. old couplet:

"March winds and April showers
Bring forth May flowers."

Cf.: "Jesus knowing that *virtue* had gone out of him," Mark v. 30 and Luke vi. 19. *Flour* and *flower* are the same word; first the bloom of plants, next a product of sublimation (chemical term), as flowers of sulphur, then any fine powder, as meal, wheaten flour.

5. *Eek* = also, Ger. *auch*. *Swete*, see note, line 1.
6. *Holte* = *Holt*, a wood or plantation; extant as a provincialism, and in several local names, as Knockholt in Kent.
7. *Yonge sonne* (*yonge* is the definite of *yong*).—Because he has as yet run through but one of the twelve signs of the zodiac.
8. *Halfe cours*.—"The Man of Lawes" in the prologue to his tale tells us that it is the 18th of April: Chaucer in his *Astrolabe* always refers to the signs, not the constellations, and in his first figure places opposite the month of April the latter half of the Ram

And smalȝ fowlȝ maken melodie,
 That slepen al the night with open eye,
 So priketh hem natȝre in here corages:—
 Thanne longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,
 And palmers for to seeken straungȝ strondȝ,
 To fernȝ halwes, kouthe in sondry londȝ;

10

and the first half of the Bull. The former of these was now just completed; the sun had run that half of the Ram which falls in April. *I-ronne*, *i* or *y*, the sign of the past. part., represents, doubtless too in sound, the O.E. *ge-*, retained in German.

- 9, 10. *Maken* and *slepen* are plurals, so is *smale*.
 11. *Priketh* = excites, urges, prompts.
 11. *Hem* = them, obj. pl.; *here*, poss. pl. = their; the fem. poss. now *her*, is written by Chaucer *hir*, *hire* (see description of the Prioress, p. 49). In A.S. *hira* = their (all genders), *hire* = her.
 11. *Corage*.—Heart, from Lat. *cor*, Fr. *cœur*, heart. The meaning courage is secondary to this.
 12. *To gon* = *to goen* = to go. Our perf. *went* is borrowed from another verb, to *wend* (see line 16), obsolete except in the phrase "to wend one's way." The Aryan root *ga* underlies nearly all the words implying motion in Sanscrit, Teutonic, and even Greek. Some derive the A.S. perf. *ēode* from the root *i*, found also in Latin *eo*, *ire*, but this is doubtful, for in O. H. German they seem to pass into one another.
 13. *Palmers*.—A pilgrim was one who made a single or occasional journey to a shrine without any special conditions; a palmer, so called from the staff of a palm-tree which he carried as evidence of his having visited the Holy Land, professed poverty, and must pass his whole life in perpetual pilgrimages. Another badge of the palmer was some scallop-shells, as seen in the arms of families of the name of Palmer, presumed to have been gathered by him on the "straunge strondes" or foreign shores that he had visited. "Foreign" was the original meaning of *strange*, as still of the Fr. *étranger*.
 13. *For to seeken*.—The gerundial obj., not the infin. One must understand *longen* after *palmers* and *wenden* before to *ferne halwes*.
 14. *Ferne halwes*, *kouthe* = distant saints known. *Fern* or *ferren*, from the adv. *far*, must be distinguished from *foreign*, Fr. *forain*, Low Lat. *foraneus*, from L. *foras*, out of doors, abroad. A *g* has been interpolated from a false analogy with *reign* = *regnum*. Others would explain this as meaning *olden*, *ancient*, A.S. *fyrn*.

And specially, from every schirës endë 15
 Of Engelond, to Canturbury they wendë,
 The holy blisful martir for to seekë,
 That hem hath holpen whan that they were seekë.
 Byfel that, in that sesoun on a day,
 In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay, 20
 Redy to wenden on my pilgrimagë
 To Caunterbury with ful devout coragë,
 At night was come into that hostelrie
 Wel nyne and twenty in a compainye,
 Of sondry folk, by aventure i-fallë 25
 In felaweschipe, and pilgryms were thei allë,

Halwes = holy ones, saints. All Hallows' is All Saints' day. *Kouth*, pl. of *kouth* or *couth*, part. of *cunnan*, to know. *Uncouth* is unknown, strange, thence awkward. *Outlandish*, once foreign, has undergone the same change of meaning.

17. *Holy blisful martir*.—Thomas à Becket, called also St. Thomas of Canterbury.
18. *Seeke*.—Pl. of *seek*, A.S. *seoc* = sick; in the previous line it is the verb to seek.
19. *Byfel*.—Verb impers., it befell or chanced.
20. *Tabard*.—Defined by Speght, in his Glossary to Chaucer, as a sleeveless jacket or coat, formerly worn by nobles in war, but now by heralds only. On it were emblazoned their arms, whence the expression "coat of arms." It was the sign of a well-known inn in Southwark, to which adjoined the house of the Abbot of Hyde, near Winchester.
20. *Lay* = resided. "When the court lay at Windsor."—*Merry Wives of Windsor*, ii. 2.
23. *Was*.—Collective singular. We should now say *were*.
23. *Hostelrie*.—O. Fr. *hostellerie*, Mod. Fr. *hôtellerie*, lengthened from *hostel*, *hôtel*, Eng. *hotel*. Our word *host* comes through the French from L. *hospes*, a guest, a host. *Ostler*, now the man in charge of the stables, is really *hostellier*, or the keeper of the inn. *Host*, an army, is from L. *hostis*, enemy; and the *host* or consecrated elements in the Roman Catholic Church from L. *hostia*, a sacrifice, first for victory over an enemy, then any sacrifice.
25. *Aventure*.—Fr.; in Mod. E. *adventure*. Chaucer accentuates French words on the last syllable.
25. *I-falle* = *i-fallen* = fallen, i.e. by adventure or chance.

That toward Caunterbury wolden ryðð.
 The chambres and the stables weren wydð,
 And wel we weren esed attð bestð.
 And schortly, whan the sonnð was to restð, 30
 So hadde I spoken with hem everychon,
 That I was of here felaweschipe anon,
 And madð forward erly for to rysð,
 To take our wey ther as I yow devysð.
 But natheles, whiles I have tyme and spacð, 35
 Or that I forther in this talð pacð,
 Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun,
 To telle yow allð the condicioun
 Of eche of hem, so as it semede me,
 And whiche they weren, and of what degrð; 40
 And eek in what array that they were innð:
 And at a knight than wol I first bygynnð.

-
27. *Wolden* = would, past tense of *will*, which had not lost its primary signification of to wish, L. *volo*.
 28. *Weren* = were. A.S. *waron*.
 29. *Esed atte beste* = entertained in the best manner. Easement is still used as a law term for accommodation.
 30. *To reste* = at rest. *To* is used in the western counties and in the U. States for *at*, as *zu* in German.
 31. *Everychon* = ever each one, every one.
 32. *Anon* = immediately, probably *on an* (instant).
 34. *Ther as I yow devyse* = where I tell you of. Devise was to describe, as advise to inform. Cf. trade term an *advice*.
 35. *Natheless*.—Not the less, nevertheless.
 35. *Whiles*, from *while* = time; *whiles* = *whilst*, a genitive form.
 36. *I forther in this tale pace* = I pass further in this tale.
 37. *Me thinketh*.—Same as "It semede me," in line 39: the *me* is the dative case after the impers. verb *it thinketh*. In A.S. and O.E. *thencan* = to think, and *thyncean* = to seem. The Germans keep up the distinction, *ich denke, es dünkt mir*.
 37. *Acordaunt* = according. The Eng. ending *-ing* had not yet replaced the Fr. *-ant*.
 41. *Inne*, the adverb; *in*, the prep.
 42. *Wol*.—Not found in the oldest Eng. or A.S.; a quasi regular present suggested by the past *wolde*.

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
 That from the tymē that he first bigan
 To ryden out, he lovede chyvalrye, 45
 Trouthe and honoür, fredom and curteisie.
 Ful worthi was he in his lordēs werrē,
 And therto hadde he riden, noman ferrē,
 As wel in Christendom as in hethenessē,
 And evere honoured for his worthinessē. 50
 At Alisandre he was whan it was wonnē.
 Ful oftē tyme he hadde the bord bygonnē

43. *Knight*.—The primary idea conveyed by this word is that of a personal attendant of any kind. In A.S. a disciple is *leorning cniht*, but in O.H. Ger. of the 8th and 9th centuries *kneht* is used without any qualifying words for *servant*, *soldier*, or *disciple*. Next it became restricted to the armed and mounted attendants on a king or noble, and those who before the rise of regular cavalry had received from the king or prince the right to fight on horseback. The corresponding Fr. *chevalier*, It. *cavaliero*, Sp. *caballero*, and German *ritter*, all imply the act of riding. In German the *knecht* in like manner at one time connoted horsemanship, but has been degraded to mean a stableman, or colloquially a mean fellow.
45. *Chyvalrye*.—Chivalry, the rules and duties of knighthood. Fr. *cheval*, Low L. *caballus* = a horse.
46. Mr. Earle considers these to be two pairs of synonyms, one Saxon and one French, illustrating the fact that we often find a Saxon and a French word for the same thing existing side by side in Middle English. This I doubt, for *courtesie* = the manners of courts, can hardly be defined as "fredom."
47. *Werre* = wars.
48. *Ferre* = comp. of *fer* = far. No man further.
49. *Hethenesse* = heathendom. He had, like many other knights of that age, served, when his own country was at peace, under several foreign princes as a volunteer or free-lance.
51. Alexandria was taken by Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, in 1365.
52. *He hadde the bord bygonne*.—An obscure expression. Cotgrave says "*Gaigner le hault bout*" = to win the highest prize, also to take the highest place at table, so that *bord* may be board = table; or it may be Low Ger. *boort* or M.H.G. *buhurt* = joust, tournament.

Aboven allē naciouns in Prucē.
 In Lettowe hadde he reysed and in Rucē,
 No cristen man so ofte of his degró. 55
 In Gernade attē siegē hadde he be
 Of Algesir, and riden in Belmarie.
 At Lieys was he, and at Satalie,
 Whan they were wonne; and in the Greetē see
 At many a noble arive hadde he be. 60
 At mortal batailles hadde he ben fiftene,
 And foughten for oure feith at Tramassene

53, 54.—*Pruce, Lettow, and Ruce* = Prussia, Lithuania (Ger. *Lettun*), and Russia. Our knight had served in these countries with the Teutonic knights who were engaged in constant hostilities with their Pagan and Mohammedan neighbours. They had compelled the Pagan Slavs of Russia to embrace Christianity in the preceding century, but the Lithuanians were still heathen, and though the Russian people had received Christianity at an early period, their country was overrun by Tatars, and they were struggling against the authority of the successors of Zinghis Khan.

54. *Reysed*.—A. S. *ræsan*, to rush or make inroads into a country. Cf. our word *race*. The Germans use *reisen* = to travel.

56, &c.—*Algeziras* was taken from the Moorish King of Granada (Gernade) by Alphonso XI. of Castile in 1342, though Granada itself was not reduced till 1492. *Lieys* in Armenia and *Satalie* (Attalia) were taken from the Turks by Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, in 1367 and 1352 respectively.

59. *The Greete see*.—The Great Sea, the name frequently used in the O. T. for the Levant or eastern portion of the Mediterranean, to distinguish it from the Red Sea and the lakes of Palestine. It is used in the same sense by Sir J. Mandeville.

60. *Arive* = arrival or disembarkation.

61. *Mortal* = deadly. We still say mortal strife in poetry or rhetorical language. Cf. *Parad. Lost*, line 1, 2:

“The fruit
 Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
 Brought death, &c.

Our present usage is a return to the classical meaning of the word.

In lystës thriës, and ay slayn his foo.
 This ilkë worthi knight hadde ben also
 Somtymë with the lord of Palatye, 65
 Ageyn another hethen in Turkye:
 And evermore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
 And though that he was worthy he was wys,
 And of his port as meke as is a maydë.
 He never yit no vileinye ne saydë 70

63. *Lystes*.—Properly the inclosure for tournaments, &c., like our modern ring; then, as here, any single combat.

64. *Ilke* = same; A.S. *ylc*. Cf. Scot. "of that ilk;" as, "Sir James Grant of that ilk," that is, of Grant.

65. *Palatye* (Palathia) in Anatolia, a lordship held by the Christian knights after the Turkish conquest.

66. *Ageyn* = against.

66. *Hethen* = any non-Christian, not necessarily an idolater. Heathen from *heath*, and pagan from *pagus*, a village, were used to designate those who adhered to the ancient religions while Christianity was as yet almost confined to the more intelligent inhabitants of the town. The first instance of this use of the word *pagan* occurs in an edict of the Emperor Valentinian, A.D. 368. The earlier fathers employed *Gentile* in the same sense.

67. *Sovereyn prys* = highest renown. Sovereign, from Low Lat. *superanus*, from L. *super*, above; Sp. *soverano*, It. *sovrano*, O.Fr. *souverain*, Mod. Fr. *souverain*. The *g* insinuated itself into the older French word through a false analogy with *règne* (L. *regnum*), a kingdom. Milton's familiarity with Italian led him to write *souvan*, and why should not we drop the *g* as the French have? *Praise*, *prize*, and *price* are all of the same origin, L. *pretium*, value.

68. *Though that he was worthy*. *Worthy* here means bold; though bold, he was prudent and gentle or unassuming.

70. *Vileinye*.—Any conduct unbecoming a gentleman. *Villanus*, from *villa*, a farm, was originally simply a serf, then by association of ideas a rude, unmannerly, low-bred fellow, then a blackguard, irrespectively of his social rank. *Boor* (Ger. *bauer* and Dutch *boer*) has undergone the like change of meaning, and *churl* (A.S. *ceorl* or *carl*), a free tenant at will, a corresponding degradation.

In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.
 He was a verray perfigt gentil knight.
 But for to tellë you of his aray,
 His hors was good, but he ne was nought gay.
 Of fustyan he wered a gepoun 75
 Al bysmoterëd with his haburgeoun,

71. *No maner wight* = no manner of wight. This word (A.S. *wiht*), now nearly obsolete, is a great loss to our language. It implied simply a human being, male or female. The Scotch have *body* as an equivalent; we are compelled, except in the expressions any-, some-, no-, and everybody, to substitute creature, person, individual, or some other less appropriate Latin periphrase.
72. *Verray perfigt gentil knight*.—*Verray*, O.F. *vray*, now *vrai* = true, truly. L. *verus*, true. (Ger. *wahr*.) *Perfigt*, now more correctly *perfect*, L. *perfectus*. In *delight*, L. *delecto*, we still retain the *gh* from a false analogy with *light*. *Gentile* and *gentle* are each derived from L. *gens*, a nation or family. The former, like the Greek *ta ethnea* (the nations) was used to distinguish the nations of the world from God's chosen people Israel, and later, heathens from Christians. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. 2, speaks of "the falsehood of oracles, whereupon all gentility was built." The latter was applied in the age of chivalry to one whose family had been noble or *armigeri*, i.e. entitled to bear certain devices on their arms, for several generations, four in England and Germany, three in France, where the first was *annobli*, the second *noble*, the third *un gentilhomme*, a title to which many a duke or marquis could not lay claim. Our James I. told his nurse that he could make her son a lord but not a gentleman. Only gentlemen in this sense were eligible for several knightly orders, as the Teutonic; and the rule obtains still, in the case of some continental or at least German orders. Next *gentle*, as in the text, implied the possession of those moral and social qualities supposed to mark a man of noble blood. It means far more than *meek* (line 69), indeed it includes all that has been described in lines 68-71.
74. *Ne. . . nought*. A double negation in O.E. does not constitute an affirmative.
74. *Gay* refers to attire or dress, not to manners.
75. *Gepoun*.—Dim. of *gipe*, a short plaided coat.
76. *Haburgeoun*.—Dim. of or synonymous with *hauberk*, from O.G. *hals*, neck or chest, and *bergen*, to cover; a coat of chain-mail without

For he was late ycome from his viagē,
And wentē for to doon his pilgrimagē.

With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,
A lovyere, and a lusty bachelor, 80
With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in pressē.
Of twenty yeer he was of age I gessē.
Of his statūre he was of evene lengthē,
And wondurly delyver, and gret of strengthē.
And he hadde ben somtyme in chivachie, 85
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardie,

sleeves, before the introduction of plate armour; it was long enough to protect the abdomen and legs.

"Helm nor *hauberks* twisted mail."—Gray's *Bard*.

76. *Bysmotered*.—Besmattered or soiled with rust and blood.

77. *Viage* = voyage or travels. Voyage, as in French, was used of travels by land as well as by sea down to the end of the seventeenth century. He had just come back from the wars, and had vowed to go straight to the shrine to return thanks for his preservation.

79. *Squyer* = esquire, O.F. *escuyer*, from Lat. *scutiger*, in classic Latin an armour-bearer, in mediæval language successively an armed attendant on a prince or knight, a gentleman armed and mounted at his own expense, and one entitled to armorial bearings. *Escuage* was pecuniary composition for such personal service.

80. *Lusty* = merry.

80. *Bachelor*.—Few words have puzzled antiquarians and etymologists more than this. Modern authorities derive the word (Fr. *bachelier*, O. Fr. *bachelor*) from Low L. *baccalarius*, the owner of a small farm, a farm-servant. *Knights Bachelors*, the lowest and oldest of the orders of knighthood; and *Bachelors* in the universities are the lowest order of graduates in the several faculties of arts, law, medicine, divinity, &c. The academic term is always written *Baccalaureus*, as if it had something to do with laurel wreaths. *Bachileria* as an old law term signified freemen below the rank of nobles. A *bachelor* is also an unmarried man.

81. *Crulle* = curled. Dutch *krol*, *krolle*. The displacement of the *r* is common. E. *bird* in A.S. is *brid*.

84. *Delyver* = lithesome, active. Fr. *delivre*, L. *liber* = free.

85. *Chivachie* = Fr. *chevauchée*, a raid or expedition of cavalry (*cheval*, a horse).

86. *At Cressy*, &c., under Edward III.

And born him wel, as in so litel spacē,
 In hope to stonden in his lady gracē.
 Embrowded was he, as it were a mede
 Al ful of fresshē flourēs, white and reede. 90
 Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;
 He was as fressh as is the moneth of May.
 Schort was his goune, with sleevēs longe and wydē.
 Wel cowde he sitte on hors and fairē rydē.
 He cowdē songēs wel make and enditē, 95
 Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtray and writē.
 So hote he lovede, that by nightertale
 He sleep nomore than doth a nightyngale.
 Curteys he was, lowly, and servysable,
 And carf byforn his fader at the table. 100
 A YEMAN had he, and servauntz nontoo
 At that tymē, for him lust rydē soo;

87. *Born him wel.*—Acquitted himself well.

88. *Lady grace.*—The old possessive fem. was *e*, not *es*; *lady* stands for *ladye*. Cf. *Lady Day*.

89. *Embrowded* = embroidered, *i.e.* in his dress.

91. *Floytynge* = fluting, or playing the flute.

95. *Endite* = recite or relate.

96. *Juste and eek daunce* = joust, or contend in a tournament, and also dance.

96. *Purtray* = *portray* = draw or paint. He was as accomplished as he was manly and strong.

97. *Hote* = hotly. *E* is the adverbial ending.

97. *Nightertale* = night-time. *Tale* has here its primary import of a number or reckoning, viz. of the hours. So, too, to tell meant to count. Cf.: "The *tale* of the bricks," Ex. v. 8 and 18. "We spend our years as a *tale* that is told," Ps. xc. 9. "The shepherd tells his *tale*," *i.e.* counts over his sheep. Milton, *L'Allegro*. In modern Ger. *zahl* (number) and *zählen* (to number) retain their original sense exclusively.

99. *Servysable* = willing to be of service, to make himself useful.

100. *Carf* = carved.

101. *Yeman* = a yeoman, an attendant above the rank of a menial servant. It was used in a secondary sense of the middle class of the rural population, and lastly to signify a small landholder

And he was clad in coote and hood of grene.
 A shef of pocok arwës bright and kene
 Under his belte he bar full thriftily. 105
 Wel cowde he dresse his takel yemanly;
 His arwës drowpede nougt with fetheres lowe.
 And in his hond he bar a mighty bowe.
 A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visagë.
 Of woode-craft cowde he wel al the usagë. 110

not a gentleman. *Gwds*, O.H.G., a young man or servant, *gwds gywech*, a strong brave man. Kremsier's *Urteutsche Sprache*.

102. *Ryde*, for *ryden* = to ride. The inf. "He had a yeoman, but no more servants at that time, for it pleased him to ride so" (without more escort).
103. *He*, i.e. the yeoman.
104. *Pocok arwes*.—Arrows winged with peacock feathers. Ascham in his *Toxophilus* pronounces peacock feathers to be greatly inferior to those of the goose for real use, though a thought by some to be more showy. Peacock is from Fr. *paon*, L. *pavo*, *pavonis*. It has nothing to do with peas, any more than *gooseberry*, Fr. *groseille*, has with geese. These words illustrate the tendency to press some meaning into the spelling of a foreign word.
105. *Thriftily* = carefully, sparingly. This good old word *thrift* is almost obsolete, having been superseded by the cumbrous economy, which really implies the whole of housekeeping. Cf. *political economy*, of which retrenchment is but a small part.
106. *Dresse* = set in order, make straight, direct. Fr. *dresser*, It. *dirizzare*, L. *dirigere*. The original idea of making straight is retained in the military terms of "dressing the men," i.e. by their heights, and "dressing up" a rank or a part of it.
106. *Takel*.—Tackle, though now used only of ship's cordage and pulleys, or of those of certain machines, originally meant any implements whatever. Cf. *gear*, which, except in head-gear, is almost exclusively a nautical term nowadays.
107. *Nought* = not. Ger. *nicht*.
109. *Not-heed*.—Cropped head. Cf. *Roundheads*. To *not*, according to Bailey's *Dictionary*, 11th ed. 1745, was still used in Essex for to crop or shear.
110. *Cowde*, in its primary signification of *he knew*.

Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer,
 And by his side a swerd and a bokeler,
 And on that other side a gay daggere,
 Harneysed wel, and scharp as poynt of spere;
 A Cristofre on his brest of silver schene. 115
 An horn he bar, the bawdrik was of grene;
 A forster was he sothly, as I gessē.

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
 That of hire smylyng was ful symple and coy;
 Hire gretteste ooth ne was but by seynte Loy; 120
 And sche was cleped madame Englentyne.
 Ful wel sche sang the servisē devyne,
 Entuned in hire nose ful semēly;
 And Frensch sche spak ful faire and fetysly,

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111. *Bracer* = a covering for the arm. Fr. *bras*, the arm. Cf. *bracelet*, dim. of same word. According to Ascham it was a sleeve of leather without nails or buckles, which with a shooting glove formed a gauntlet, and served not only to protect the arm from the bowstring, but presented a smooth surface for the string to glide along.
112. *Bokeler*.—Buckler. Fr. *bouclier*, akin to *buckle*, a shield of leather strengthened with an iron boss and plates.
114. *Harneysed* = harnesssed = equipped, in reference here to the sheath and belt.
115. *Cristofre*.—A brooch with the effigy of St. Christopher, held as a charm.
115. *Schene* = bright; A.S. *scīne*. Cf. *shining*. Ger. *schön*, beautiful.
116. *Bawdrik*.—O.H.G. *balderich*, deriv. of *belt*, a military belt, often decked with jewels.
117. *Forster*.—Forester. Ger. *fürster*.
117. *Sothly* = truly. Cf. *forsooth*, *soothsayer*, &c.
119. *Coy* = quiet. Fr. *coi*.
120. *Loy*.—Probably Louis, a mild oath. See note on line 164.
123. *Nose*.—Speght would read voice, but *nose* is found in all the best MSS.
123. *Semely*.—The three syllables to be distinctly sounded.
124. *Fetysly*, or *fetously*, later *feetly*. From O.Fr. *faictiz*, neatly done, prettily.

After the scole of Stratford attē Bowē, 125
 For Frensch of Parys was to hire unknowē.
 At metē wel i-taught was sche withallē;
 Sche leet no morsel from hire lippēs fallē,
 Ne wette hire fyngres in hire saucē deepē.
 Wel cowde sche carie a morsel, and wel keepē, 130
 That no dropē ne fil uppon hire brest.
 In curtesie was set ful moche hire lest.
 Hire overlippē wyped sche so clenē,
 That in hire cuppē was no ferthing senē
 Of greecē, whan sche dronken hadde hire draughtē. 135
 Ful semēly after hire mete schē raughtē.
 And sikerly sche was of gret disport,
 And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,
 And peynēd hire to counterfetē cheere
 Of court, and ben estatlich of manere, 140

125. *Scole*.—School (in sense of style) of Stratford, i.e. Norman French; not unlike the old Law French.

127. *At mete*.—At meals. These simple directions for behaviour at table are to be found in Caxton's *Book of Curtesye*, *The Babes Book*, and other mediæval manuals.

129. *Sauce* = a saucer, a deep plate. For *sauce* as a made dish, see note on l. 625. Fingers had not yet been superseded by forks and spoons.

131. *No dropē ne fil* = no drop fall. Double negative, as in French and A.S.

132. *Lest*.—Pleasure. She affected to be a woman of fashion and good breeding.

133. *Overlippe*.—Upper lip.

134. *Ferthing*.—Literally a fourth part. Cf. *farthing* (of a penny). Hence the smallest fragment.

136. *Mete* = food of any kind; butcher's meat was until the seventeenth century always termed *flesh*, as in our Bible, where also the *meat-offering* means one consisting usually of the fruits of the earth.

138. *Raughte*.—The old past tense of *reche*, to reach. Like *teach*, *taught*.

137. *Sikerly*.—Surely. Ger. *sicherlich*.

137. *Disport*.—A noun; we now use it only as a verb.

139. *Peyned hire* = she laboured or studied; a verb reflexive; *pains* and *painful* long retained the meaning of effort without any thought

And to ben holden digne of reverencē.
 But for to speken of hire consciencē,
 Sche was so charitable and so pitous,
 Sche woldē weepe if that sche sawe a mous
 Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bleddē. 145
 Of smalē houndēs hadde sche, that sche feddē
 With rosted fleissch or mylk and wastel breed.
 But sore wepte sche if oon of hem were deed,
 Or if men smot it with a yerdē smertē:
 And al was conscience and tendrē hertē. 150

of suffering. Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* v. 19, speaks of the "painful travels" of Biblical translators, i.e. careful labours.

139. *Cheere*.—O.Fr. *chiere*. Countenance, aspect. Cf. "Be of good cheer."
140. *Fstatlich*.—Stately. See note on l. 132.
141. *Digne* = worthy; L. *dignus*.
145. *Deed* = dead.
146. *Houndes*.—Probably dogs not necessarily for hunting.
147. *Wastel*.—A cake. Fr. *gâteau*; the O.Fr. was *gastel*, in Picardy *ouastel*; Anglo-Norman *wastel*; not the usual food of dogs, unless ladies' pets. The finest flour called bolted (or sifted) was made into manchet bread, O.Fr. *michette*, *miche*, L. *mica*; the unbolted into *chete* or coarse wheaten, i.e. brown bread; while the middle classes and servants used *mesclain*, or *maslin*, a mixture of wheaten and rye flour, and the poor a still coarser though most nutritious meal of rye, oatmeal, and lentils. Fancy breads were also made under the names of *puynepuffe*, *march*, or *mass-pane*, &c.
149. *Men smot*.—*Men*, or O.E. *me*, stands, like the Ger. *man*, or Fr. *on*, O.Fr. *om*, i.e. *homme*, for one; if *men* pl. were meant the verb would be *smote*.
149. *Yerde*.—Originally a rod or stick of any kind; secondarily, a measure; so pole is used in either sense. Yard retains its primary meaning in a ship's yards; and *pertica*, the source of our perch, is simply a pole or long staff in Latin and Italian.
149. *Smerte*.—Probably the adverb *smartly*.
150. The context shows that *conscience* here and in line 142 means rather feeling, sensibility, than the high moral sense implied by the word now.

Ful semely hire wympel i-pynchèd was;
 Hire nose tretys; hire eyen greye as glas;
 Hire mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;
 But sikerly sche hadde a fair forheed.
 It was almost a spannè brood, I trowè; 155
 For hardily sche was not undergrowè.
 Ful fetys was hire cloke, as I was waar.
 Of smal coral aboute hire arme sche baar
 A peire of bedës gauded al with grene;
 And theron heng a broch of gold ful schene, 160
 On which was first i-written a crowned A,
 And after *Amor vincit omnia*.

151. *Wympel*.—Wimple, a plaited white linen covering for the neck and shoulders, worn mostly by elderly women and nuns. *I-pynched*, drawn close.

152. *Tretys*.—A.N., long and well proportioned, probably connected with the Fr. *trait*, drawn out.

Harl. MS. reads *streight*, but *tretys* Ellesm. suits the verse better.

153. *Reed* = red. The proper name *Reed* or *Reid* is the same.

154. *Fair*.—Fine, not fair complexioned.

156. *Hardily*.—Same as *sikerly* in line 154.

157. *Waar* = aware.

159. *Bedes*.—The original meaning of beads was prayer, A.S. *bidan*, to pray, Ger. *beten*, then the "beads" used as aids in counting the paternosters and ave-marias to be repeated consecutively. The "bidding prayer" in the Church of England service, in which the minister calls on the people to pray for the whole state of Christ's church militant here on earth, owes its name to the pre-reformation practice of the priest before beginning his sermon calling on the people to pray silently for the king, pope, &c., and to say a paternoster, an ave-maria, &c., on their beads.

Gauded al with grene.—The larger beads were called *gaudies*, because *gauded* or ornamented with gold, silver, or colours. (Palsgrave.)

160. *Broch* or *brooch* was used not for a clasp-pin, but for any such jewel or ornament; here it seems to have been a kind of locket. In 1845 a brooch in the form of an A, with the Norman French inscription, "*Jo fas amer, e doz de amer*," apparently of the fourteenth century, was found in a field in Dorset.

Another NONNĖ with hire haddð sche,
That was hire chapeleyn, and PRESTĖS thre.

A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrie, 165
An out-rydere, that loved venerye;

163, 164. These lines, which have given rise to many conjectures, have been fully cleared up by Mr. Furnivall in a letter to the Academy (May, 1880), by an appeal to a lady who had herself held the office of secretary and chaplain to the lady abbess of a convent of Benedictine nuns in England. She says, *inter alia*, that one of her duties was to hold the crozier when on the great festivals the abbess intoned the hymns and read the capitulums, lessons, and prayers, her hands being occupied with her book. On the Continent the chaplain held the book, for in an old French ceremonial of the Abbey of Montmartre, dated 1669, there is mention not only of the "Chapeline" but also of the "Porte-Crosse." "Vne des sœurs sera choisie par la mère abbessse pour estre sa chapeline. Sa place au chœur sera du costé droit, proche du siège de la mère abbessse, qui lors qu'elle sera obligée de chanter quelque chose, la chapeline viendra à sa costé droit afin de luy tenir le livre; ce qu'elle fera encore aux processions et autres cérémonies." Further on in the same chapter is the office of "Porte-Crosse,"—"une sœur qui viendra au costé gauche de la mère abbessse lorsqu'il faudra se servir de la crosse," &c.

As to the presence of priests in a female society Mr. Furnivall had shown that the Abbey of St. Mary's, Winchester, when broken up at the Reformation had no less than five priests; and the same Benedictine nun explains why several priests were necessary. In the Benedictine abbey (for nuns) at Rheims, there were "*chapels* in the church, each of course with an altar, and *some* of these chapels were *each* to have *daily* mass. Now a priest can say but one mass daily, therefore where more than one daily mass was required, more priests must necessarily be kept."

As to the equivocal "St. Loy," the lady naively observes, "I can only believe that 'St. Loy' was an expression, no real name, and thus (!) no real oath."

165. *A fair for the maistrie* = one who bid fair to excel in his profession.

166. *Out-rydere*.—One who could ride cross country.

Venerye = hunting; Fr. *vénérir*, from Lat. *venari*, to hunt, whence also our word *venison*.

A manly man, to ben an abbot able.
 Full many a deynté hors hadde he in stable :
 And whan he rood, men might his bridel heerð
 Gynglyng in a whistlyng wynd as cleerð, 170
 And eek as lowde as doth the chapel bellð.
 Ther as this lord was keperð of the sellð

167. A sly hit at the worldly habits of the monks. Chaucer's description of the friar is satirical and suggestive enough, and both in strong contrast with the worthy parson or parish priest, satisfactory proof that many a truly Christian minister lived in those dark days though history has failed to record their good deeds.

170. *Gynglyng* = jingling. Fashionable riders hung small bells to their bridles and harness. Wycliffe, a contemporary of Chaucer, denounces the worldliness of the clergy, their "fair hors (pl.) and joly and gay sadeles and bridels ringing by the way."

172-176. The meaning of this passage is "At the cell where this lord was the superior the rules of SS. Benedict and Maur were observed; but since these rules were old and somewhat strict he let them be regarded as obsolete, and followed the newer fashions."

Ther as = where that.

Selle.—A cell, originally the private chamber of each single monk, was afterwards used to designate a religious house which was not incorporated or itself possessed of endowments, but in connection with and dependent on some larger monastery. Of such a house this lord, as he is ironically called, was the superior, not having as yet attained the rank of abbot, though probably destined to be one before long.

St. Benet or Benedict of Nursia in Italy, born A.D. 480, founded the order of Benedictines, whose mode of life was severely ascetic. Their rules were revised by Benedict of Aniana in Languedoc, A.D. 817. In the middle ages they were the greatest conservators of learning, and the first English monks were of this order, which from the twelfth century became the wealthiest and most influential in Christendom.

St. Maur, or Mauritius, a disciple of St. Benedict.

Pace = 'pass by: for "olde thinges pace" the Harl. MS. reads "forby hem pace," *forby* meaning away.

Space.—Lansd. MS. *pace* = steps.

Olde thinges.—This is the reading of most of the MSS., and I have adopted it instead of that of the MS. Harl. *forby hem*, which appears to give no clear sense.

The reule of seynt Maure or of seint Beneyt,
 Bycause that it was old and somdel streyt,
 This ilke monk leet oldē thingēs pacē, 175
 And helde after the newē world the spacē.
 He gaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
 That seith, that hunters been noon holy men;
 Ne that a monk, whan he is reccheles
 Is likned to a fische that is waterles; 180
 This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre.
 But thilkē text held he not worth an oystre.
 And I seide his opinioun was good.
 What schulde he studie, and make himselven wood,
 Uppon a book in cloystre alway to powrē, 185
 Or swynkē with his handēs, and labourē,
 As Austyn byt? How schal the world be served?
 Lat Austyn have his swynk to him reserved.

177. *Pulled*.—Probably *pylled*=bald, scabby, or moulting (as if *peeled*).

Text, an authoritative quotation; so the term *scripture* was applied to the writings of saints, &c., as well as to the Bible.

178. *Noon* = none.

179–181 *Reccheles* = reckless, careless. A.S. *reccan*, to think, regard.

All the oldest MSS. read *reccheles*, though Mr. T. Wright, on the authority of one at Cambridge, proposes *cloysterles*. The "text," he observes, is taken from a Decretal of Gratian—"Sicut piscis sine aqua caret vita, ita sine monasterio monachus," though Chaucer more probably found it in the life of Louis IX. by le Sieur de Joinville, who says, "The Scriptures (*sic*) do say that a monk cannot live out of his cloister without falling into deadly sins, any more than a fish can live out of water without dying." Had Chaucer, however, written *cloysterles* the explanation in l. 181 would have been superfluous and redundant. Prof. Ten Brink suggests *reselles*, i.e. without shelter; but, unsatisfactory as *reccheles* may be, all authority supports it.

183. *Seide* = said.

184. *Wood*.—A.S. *wod*, from *wedan*, to rage or be mad. Cf. Mod. Ger. *wüthen*, to rave. In this sentiment he shows his disregard of the traditions of his order. *Wud* = mad, is still used in Scotland.

186. *Swynke* = to toil.

187. *Byt* = bids. St. Augustine of Canterbury enjoined on his clergy a life of the utmost strictness and simplicity.

Therefore he was a pricasour aright;
 Greyhoundes he hadde as swifte as fowels in flight; 190
 Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
 Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
 I saugh his slevës purfiled atte hondë
 With grys, and that the fynest of a londë.
 And for to festne his hood under his chynne 195
 He hadde of gold y-wrought a curious pynne:
 A love-knotte in the grettere ende ther was.
 His heed was balled, and schon as eny glas,
 And eek his face as he hadde ben anynt.
 He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt; 200
 His eyen steepe, and rolling in his heed,
 That stemede as a forneys of a leed;
 His bootës souple, his hors in gret estate;
 Now certainly he was a fair prelate;
 He was not pale as a for-pyned goost. 205
 A fat swan lovede he best of eny roost.

189. *Pricasour* = a hard rider, one who pricks or spurs his horse.

191. *Of*, i.e. in.

192. *Lust* = pleasure.—At no cost would he give up such pursuits.

193. *Purfiled*.—Fr. *pourfiler*, to embroider; here it means *trimmed*. L. *filum* = a thread.

Atte honde = at the hand (or cuff).

194. *Grys*.—A costly (gray?) fur. Fr. *gris*, gray.

198. His head was bald.

200. *In good poynt*.—Rendering of Fr. *embonpoint*.

201. *Steepe*.—Not steep, deep, sunken, but an old word meaning bright.
 "His twa ehnen semden steappre thene sterren," his two eyes
 seemed brighter than stars.

202. *Stemede as a forneys of a leed*.—Shone or glowed as the furnace of
 or under a cauldron. The O.E. *steme* was not restricted to the
 steam of water. The old dictionary called the Promptorium
 Parvulorum defines L. *flamma* as the "steme of fyre."

203. It was the fashion to wear high boots of soft leather fitting closely
 to the leg.

204. A prelate is an ecclesiastic who is set over (*prelatus*) or has juris-
 diction over others; a bishop or abbot. Cf. note on line 172.

205. *For-pyned*.—Tormented or wasted. *For* is intensitive. To pine
 meant primarily to suffer; "pinede under Ponce Pilate," Old
 Creed. Thence to waste away through pain.

His palfray was as broun as is a berye.

A FRERE ther was, a wantoun and a merye,
A lymytour, a ful solempnē man.

In alle the ordres foure is noon that can 210
So moche of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde i-mad many a fair mariage

207. *Palfray* = a horse for the road. Fr. *palefroi*, from Low L. *paraveredus*, from prefix *para*, and *veredus*, from Lat. *veho*, to carry or draw, and *rheda*, a four-wheeled carriage.

208. *Wantoun*.—Literally untrained, then lively, wild, &c. *Wan* is an O.E. negative prefix like *un*. We meet successively in Middle English the forms *unitowen*, *wanitowen*, *untoun*, and *wanton*. Cf. to *tow* = to draw, and draw = train. *Wanhope* = despair, *wantrust* = distrust, &c.

Merye = pleasant. Merryweather = fine weather.

Bishop Burnet, *Hist. of Reformation*, bk. iii. (p. 189 of 1st folio ed.), says of the friars, "They were not so idle and lazy as the monks, but went about and preached and heard confessions and carried about indulgences and many other pretty little things, Agnus Dei's, rosaries, and pebles, &c., and they had the esteem of the people wholly engrossed to themselves. They were also more formidable to princes than the monks, because they were poorer, and by consequence more hardy and bold. . . . They likewise . . . were great preachers, so that many things concurred to raise their esteem with the people very high, yet great complaints lay against them, for they went more abroad than the monks did, and were believed guilty of corrupting families."

There were four orders of mendicant friars. 1. The Dominicans or preaching friars, who settled at Oxford in 1221, and were known as Black friars. 2. The Franciscans or Gray friars, founded by Francis of Assisi in 1209, and appearing in England in 1224. 3. The Carmelites or White friars, who first came here in 1240; and 4. The Augustin or Austin friars, introduced by Adewold, confessor to Henry I., whose vow included not only poverty and chastity but silence. Their superior in England was *ex-officio* an alderman of the city of London.

209. *Lymytour*.—One who had a limit or district assigned to him within which he might beg alms.

210. *Can* = knows.

211. *Daliaunce*.—Small talk, entertaining conversation. Akin to *tales*

Of yongȝ wymmen, at his ownȝ cost.
 Unto his ordre he was a noble post.
 Ful wel biloved and famulier was he 215
 With frankeleyns over-al in his cuntré,
 And eek with worthi wommen of the toun:
 For he hadde powȝr of confessioun,
 As seyde himself, more than a curat,
 For of his ordre he was licenciāt. 220
 Ful sweetȝly herde he confessioun,
 And plesaunt was his absolucioun;
 He was an esy man to geve penauncȝ
 Ther as he wiste to han a good pitauncȝ;
 For unto a poure ordre for to gevȝ 225
 Is signȝ that a man is wel i-schrevȝ.
 For if he gaf, he dorstȝ make avaunt,
 He wistȝ that a man was repentaunt.

in sense of stories. O.E. *dalȝyn* (Promp. Parv.), *talen*, line 772, Swiss *dalen*, *talen*. This is the source of our *tale*, a story, quite distinct from *tale* (of bricks, &c.), which is akin to the Ger. *zahl* = number.

To *dally* is to gossip, not to delay.

214. *Post* = a pillar or support. Cf. Gal. ii. 9.

219. *Curat*.—A clergyman having "cure of souls." Fr. *curé*, an incumbent, not as now an assistant minister. So in the Church of England service prayer is offered "for all bishops and curates," including under these two terms the whole ministry of a Protestant Episcopal Church.

220. *Licentiāt*.—He had the pope's license to give absolution for all sins and in every place, whereas the "curate" must refer graver cases to his bishop.

224. Wherever he knew that he should have a good pittance. *Pitaunce*, originally the extra allowance of food served out to the inmates of a religious house on the greater festivals; then any allowance of food; and, lastly, a small allowance of anything, money, &c. It seems to be connected with *piety*. It. *pieta* and *pietanza*.

225-232. A satire on the hypocrisy or at least the convenience of buying absolution worthy of Wycliffe himself. *May not wepe*.—May is used in the original sense of has not the power to. Although it spurs him sorely.

For many a man so hard is of his hertē,
 He may not wepe although him sorē smertē. 230
 Therefore in stede of wepyng and prayeres,
 Men moot give silver to the pourē freres.
 His typet was ay farsed ful of knyfēs
 And pynnēs, for to givē fairē wyfēs.
 And certaynli he hadde a mery noote. 235
 Wel couthe he synge and pleyen on a rote.
 Of yeddynges he bar utterly the prys.
 His nekkē whit was as the flour-de-lys.
 Therto he strong was as a champioun.
 He knew the tavernes wel in every toun, 240
 And everich hostiler and tappestère,
 Bet than a lazer, or a beggestère,

233. *Typet was ay farsed*.—His hood was always stuffed. The quasi-hood worn by clergymen not being graduates, to distinguish them from choristers or other surpliced laymen, is called in the LVIII. Canon and the Rubrics a tippet. It was used by the friars as a pouch or bag for the trinkets which they sold, combining the trade of pedlar with the practice of begging, and doubtless finding it the more lucrative of the two. *Farsed* = stuffed, Lat. *farcio*, Fr. *farcir*, to stuff, to cram, now used chiefly in cookery.

234. Ellesmere MS. reads *yonge wyfes*.

236. *Rote*.—Some kind of musical instrument. O.E. to *rote* = to hum a tune, to say or learn by rote in an automatic sing-song manner, a far more significant expression than learning by heart.

237. *Yeddynges*.—A.S. *gydd* = a song, *gyddian*, to sing. Norse *gidda* = to shake, whence our *giddy*. Cf. *quaver* and *quiver*. *Yeddings* were properly ballads.

Bar utterly the prys.—Carried off unquestionably the prize. See note on line 67.

239. *Champioun*.—This word, though found in French, is Teutonic. O.H.G. *champh*, M.H.G. *kampf*, A.S. *camp*, a contest; *champ* is used in some parts of England.

241. *Tappestere* = a barmaid; the masc. was *tapper*. Originally -er was the masc. and -ster the fem. affix of agency. Thus *brewer*, *brewster*; *webber* (weaver), *webster*; *spinster*, a young unmarried woman as being still employed at the spindle. In the fourteenth century the distinction of sex began to be lost, and *maltster*, *huckster*, *songster*, and *baxter* (a baker) were used of men. *Songstress* is a double feminine, so is *sempstress*; *seamer* and

For unto swich a worthi man as he
 Acordede not, as by his faculté,
 To haue with sikē lazars aqueyntauncē. 245
 It is not honest, it may not avauncē,
 For to delen with no swich poraillē,
 But al with riche and sellers of vitaillē.
 And over al, ther as profyt schulde arisē,
 Curteys he was, and lowē of servysē. 250
 Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous.
 He was the bestē beggere in his hous,
 For though a widewe haddē nogt oo schoo,
 So plesaunt was his *In principio*,

seamster being the proper forms. In *youngster*, *gamester*, &c., it implies contempt.

242. *Bet than* = better than; *better* and *betest* or *best* were regularly formed from *bet*, but when this was superseded by *good*, *bet* was occasionally used for the adv. *better*.

Lazer.—A leper, from the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Cf. *lazaretto*.

Beggere.—See note on line 241.

- 242-245. It did not suit so worthy a man in respect of his ecclesiastical position to have acquaintance with such-like lepers.

246. *Honest* = respectable.

May not avaunce = is not calculated to advance his interests.

247. *Poraillē* = poor people, rabble.

249. *Over al* = generally. Ger. *überall*.

Ther as profyt schulde.—Where profit might.

252. After this line, the two following are added in the Hengwrt MS. only:—

And yaf a certeyne ferme for the graunt,
 Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt.

They are an evident interpolation.

253. *Oo schoo* = one shoe.

254. *In principio*.—Tyndale, after speaking of the priest's superstitious practice of crossing himself, says, "And if he leave it undone he thinketh it no small sin, and that God is highly displeased with him, and if any misfortune chance, thinketh it is therefore, which is also idolatry, and not God's word. . . . Such is the limiter's saying of 'In principio erat verbum' (In the beginning was the word), from house to house." Tyndale, pp. 61, 62, in his Answer to Sir T. More's Dialogue. Parker Soc.

Yet wolde he have a ferthing or he wentð. 255
 His purchas was wel better than his rentð.
 And rage he couthe as it were right a whelpð,
 In lovð-dayes ther couthe he mochil helpð.
 For ther he was not lik a cloysterer,
 With thredbare cope, as is a poure scoler, 260
 But he was lik a maister or a pope.
 Of double worstede was his semy-cope,
 That rounded was as a belle out of pressð.
 Somwhat he lippede, for his wantounessð,
 To make his Englissch swete upon his tungð; 265
 And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde sungð,
 His eygen twynkeled in his heed aright,
 As don the sterrës in the frosty night.
 This worthi lymytour was cleped Huberd.

255. *Ferthing*.—Not necessarily a coin. It may be a trifling gift of any kind. See note line 134.

256. His receipts by these means were much greater than his regular income. A proverbial sentiment quoted from the *Romance of the Rose*.

"Mieux vault mon pourchas que ma rente."

257. *As it were right*.—Lansd. and Corpus MSS. *right as it were*; Hari. *and pleyen as a whelp*.

258. *Love-dayes*.—Days fixed for settling disputes by arbitration without having recourse to the law. The author of *Piers Plowman's Vision* condemns them as hindering justice, and as perverted to the enrichment of the clergy. I well remember when staying with the Protestant pastor of Sachsenhausen in the principality of Waldeck, twenty years ago, the *Friedegericht* or court of peace, which the old man used to hold in his library once a week, where he thus settled disputes, but without fee or reward.

259. *For ther* = further, moreover.

260. *Cope*.—An ecclesiastical vestment, originally a cloak worn out of doors in processions, but afterwards during mass and at other functions. It was semicircular in shape, without sleeves, but provided with a hood and fastened in front by a brooch or clasp. After a time it was richly embroidered or even jewelled.

262. *Semy-cope* = a shorter cloak or cape.

263. *Belle out of presse*.—A bell fresh from the mould.

264. *Lippede*.—Lipped. Mark the changed order of the *p* and *s*. So *ask* was once *axe*, *bird*, *brid*, &c.

A MARCHAUNT was ther with a forked berd, 270
 In motteleye, and high on horse he sat,
 Uppon his heed a Flaundrisch bevere hat;
 His botës clapsed faire and fetysly.
 His resons he spak ful solempnëly,
 Sownynge alway thencre of his wynnynge. 275
 He wolde the see were kept for eny thinge
 Betwixë Middelburgh and Orëwellë.
 Wel couthe he in eschaungë scheeldës sellë.
 This worthi man ful wel his wit bisettë;
 Ther wistë no wight that he was in dettë, 280

270. *Forked berd*.—The usual fashion among franklins and burghers. The Anglo-Saxons wore their beards cut thus, not so the Normans.

271. *Motteleye*.—Motley. A garb affected by would-be gallants.

272. *Flaundrisch*.—From Flanders, Flemish.

273. *Clapsed*.—See note on line 264.

274. *Solempnely* = solemnly. This word, the L. *sollennis*, derived from the old Oscean *sollis* = all, every, and *annus*, year, meant first an anniversary, was then applied to any religious festival, and in modern languages to anything grave and serious though not exactly religious.

275. *Sownynge* = sounding. So Harl. Ellesm. Heng. and Camb. MSS., but Corpus, Petworth, and Lansdowne read *schewynge*.

Thencre = the increase.

276. He wished that the sea were protected from pirates.

For eny thinge = for fear of anything. It was for this that the traders paid the dues of tonnage and poundage to the king.

277. *Middelburgh*.—A seaport of Walcheren in Flanders.

Orewelle.—Now the Orwell, the port of Harwich.

278. He knew well the rates of exchange, and how to make a profit on his coin in the various money markets.

Scheeldes.—The French *écus*, so called from having on one side the figure of a shield; the corresponding English coin was for like reason called a *crown*.

279. *His wit bisette*.—Employed his skill or knowledge. *Wit*. (A.S. *witan* = to know) long retained this meaning. In the A.V. we read of "witty inventions," Prov. viii. 12, of the Divine wisdom. Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* v. 57, 59, uses *wit* and *witty* of ingenious but certainly not humorous interpretations of Scripture in reference to the sacraments.

So estatly was he of governauncē,
 With his bargayns, and with his chevysauncē.
 For sothe he was a worthi man withallē,
 But soth to sayn, I not what men him callē.

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also, 285
 That unto logik haddē longe i-go.

Al lenē was his hors as is a rake,
 And he was not right fat, I undertake;
 But lokede holwe, and therto soberly.
 Ful thredbare was his overeste courtiepy, 290

281. So steadily did he conduct his business.

282. *Chevysaunce*.—Arrangements for borrowing or contracts. O.Fr. *chevir*, to settle a bargain; the word survives in Fr. *achever*, to finish a matter, and in our *achieve*.

283. *Sothe* = truly.

284. *Soth to sayn* = to tell the truth.

285. *Clerk*.—A university man or man of learning; L. *clericus*, a name early given to those engaged in the ministry of the Christian church; from Gr. *klēros*, (1) a lot; (2) an allotment as of conquered land, a portion or share of an inheritance, probably because ministers are specially set apart for sacred duties. Bengel, *Gnomon N.T.*, traces the appropriation of the name by ministers thus: "*klēros*, a lot, thence a portion of the church which it devolves on the presbyter to feed, thence the pastoral office, thence the pastors, thence other learned men. What an extension and yet a degradation of the idea." By another degradation of meaning clerk has come to signify, from a scholar, one who can write, and now one who lives by writing in an office. But clergymen of the Church of England are officially styled clerks or clerks in orders; the title Reverend being merely a modern term of courtesy, generally assumed only since the early part of the last century, but previously applied to judges and others.

Oxenford.—Oxford. The name has really nothing to do with *oxen*, but contains the old Keltic word for water, seen in the river names *Usk*, *Esk*, and *Ouse*, and in *Whiskey*, a corruption of *Uisquebaugh*, i.e. strong water.

286. Had long addicted himself to the study.

289. *Holwe*.—Hollow.

Therto.—Also.

290. *Overeste* = uppermost.

For he hadde geten him yit no benefice,
 Ne was so worldly for to have office.
 For him was levere have at his beddes heede
 Twenty bookës, i-clad in blak and reede,
 Of Aristotel, and his philosophie, 295
 Then robes riche, or fithel or gay sawtrie.
 But al be that he were a philosophrë,
 Yet haddë he but litel gold in cofrë;
 But al that he mighte of his frendës hentë,
 On bookës and on lernyng he it spentë, 300
 And busily gan for the soulës preye
 Of hem that gaf him wherwith to scoley.

Courtepy.—From Dutch *fort*, short, and *pije*, cloak, the latter word surviving in our *pea-jacket*.

292. *Office* = secular calling, in contrast to *benefice* in the preceding line. The professions of medicine and law were almost monopolized by the clergy in the middle ages, as were secretaryships and offices requiring scholarship. Chancellors and high justiciaries as well as physicians were generally clergy, though they were forbidden to plead in the secular courts by Henry III. Cardinal Wolsey, lord high-chancellor, and Thomas Linacre, first president of the College of Physicians under Henry VIII., were the last of these secular ecclesiastics.

293. *Levere* = more to his liking. Ger. *lieber*; comp. "I had as *leef*."

294. So the Camb. MS., others read *clad*, leaving the verse defective.

296. *Fithel*.—A fiddle. L. *fidis*, Mid. L. *fidula* or *vitula*, whence our word *fiddle*, and the Italian *viola*, &c.

Sawtrie.—Psaltery. A sort of harp.

299. *Mighte of his frendes hente*.—This is the reading of most of the MSS., and appears to be the right one. The MS. Harl. reads, *might gete and his frendes sende*.

Hente.—Get, obtain.

301. *Gan preye* = began to pray; the inf.

302. *To scoley* = to study. Poor students at the universities here and on the Continent used to beg for their maintenance. In an old MS. poem in the Lansdowne Collection the husbandman, complaining of the impositions of the clergy and other burdens, adds—

"Than commeth clerkys of Oxford, and make their mone,
 To her scole-hire they most have money."

Luther himself begged when a student.

Of studie tooke he most cure and most heedð.
 Not oo word spak he morð than was needð;
 And that was seid in forme and reverencð, 305
 And schort and quyk, and ful of heye sentencð.
 Sownynge in moral vertu was his spechð,
 And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly techð.
 A SERGEANT OF THE LAWË, war and wys,
 That often haddð ben attð parvys, 310
 Ther was also, ful riche of excellencð.
 Discret he was, and of gret reverencð:
 He semed such, his wordðs weren so wisð,
 Justice he was ful often in assisð,
 By patente, and by pleyn commissioun; 315
 For his sciencð, and for his heih renoun,
 Of fees and robðs had he many oon.
 So gret a purchasour was nowher noon.

303. *Cure* = care.

306. *Heye sentence* = lofty sentiment.

370. *Sownynge in* = tending to. A different word from that in line 275.

309. *Sergeant of the Lawe*.—From the old Latin term *serviens ad legem*, serving the king at law. There was formerly one such officer of the crown in each county.

War = wary, the *-ware* in *beware*. -

309. Camb. MS. reads, *bothe war*, Harl. and Heng. omit *the*.

310. *Atte parvys*.—At the church porch of Old St. Paul's, where lawyers met for consultation.

314. Under the Saxon kings justice was administered in the shire and the hundred moots or courts as well as by single hlaforðs (lords or justices), and the Witenagemot combined higher judicial with legislative functions. After the Conquest the local judicial system was retained, the local Courts Baron succeeding to those of the Hlaforðs, and the *Aula Regia* or king's court to the Witenagemot, but to relieve the strain on the king's court Henry I. began the practice of deputing the powers of that court to justices *in itinere* or *in eyre* (on circuit), who were sent into the provinces as delegates of the *Aula Regia*, and empowered not merely as the judges *now* to try but to decide cases. Their appointments, at first *pro tempore*, became afterwards for life.

316. *Science* = knowledge.

318. *Purchasour* = prosecutor. Fr. *poursuivre*, It. *procacciare*, to chase, hunt after.

Al was fee symple to him in effectē,
 His purchasyng mightē nought ben enfectē. 320
 Nowher so besy a man as he ther nas,
 And yit he semede besier than he was.
 In termēs hadde he caas and domēs allē,
 That fro the tyme of kyng William were fallē.
 Therto he couthe endite, and make a thing, 325
 Ther couthē no wight pynche at his writyng.
 And every statute couthe he pleyn by roote.
 He rood but hoonly in a medlé coote,
 Girt with a seynt of silk, with barrēs smalē;
 Of his array telle I no lenger talē. 330

319. *Fee symple in effecte.*—Fee simple is said of lands and tenements held by perpetual right. He means that his success in prosecution was practically certain.

320. *Enfecte.*—Suspected of corruption, literally tainted, infected.

323. *Caas and domes.*—Cases and dooms, i.e. precedents and decisions.

324. *Were falle* = that had occurred, i.e. been tried since the time of the Conqueror.

325. He excelled alike in pleading and in the conduct of business or drawing out of deeds. *Thing* had formerly a more presentive force than now. In line 276 Earle considers "for eny thinge" to mean at any cost, price, or conditions. In German *bedingung* means stipulation, contract; in Denmark, Norway, and Iceland, *ting* and *thing* are used of judicial and deliberative assemblies. The Norwegian parliament is *stor ting*, or the great thing; and our *hustings* was originally a house for public political meetings, or such a meeting held in a house. Compare with this line of Chaucer's Ps. xlv. 1, "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king."

326. *Pynche at* = find fault with, cavil with.

327. *Pleyn by roote.*—See note on line 236. There we have the literal, here the figurative expression of which our "say by rote" is the representative.

328. *Medlé.*—A coat of mixed stuff and colour.

329. *Girt with a seynt.*—Girt with a belt. Fr. *cinct*, L. *cinctus*, our *cincture*.

Barres.—Ornaments of a girdle originally in the form of transverse bars with holes for the tongue of the buckle, but afterwards of various fanciful designs, as lion's head, &c.

A FRANKLEYN was in his companye;
 Whit was his berde, as is the dayȝye.
 Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
 Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn.
 To lyven in delite was al his wone, 335
 For he was Epicurus ownē sone,
 That heeld opynyoun that pleyn delyt
 Was verrailly felicité perfyte.
 An househaldere, and that a gret, was he;
 Seynt Julian he was in his countré. 340
 His breed, his ale, was alway after oon;
 A bettre envyned man was nowher noon.
 Withoutē bakē mete was nevere his hous,
 Of fleissch and fisch, and that so plentyuous,
 Hit snewed in his hous of mete and drynkē, 345
 Of allē deyntees that men coudē thynkē.
 After the sondry sesouns of the yeer,
 So chaunged he his mete and his soper.

331. *Frankleyn*.—A freehold landed proprietor, a descendant of those Saxon thanes who, acquiescing in the Conquest, were left in possession of their lands, though with new feudal obligations.

334. *By the morwe* = early in the morning. Cf. our *to-morrow*, on the morrow, with the German *morgen*, noun and adverb.

335. *Delite* = luxury. O.Fr. *delit*, *deleit*, from L. *delectare*, to delight. The *gh* has no right to a place in *delight*.

Wone = pleasure. Ger. *wonne*.

337. *Pleyn delyt*.—Full, or the height, of luxury.

340. *Seynt Julian*.—The patron of hospitality.

341. *Breed* = bread.

After oon = of one quality, i.e., whether his guests were high or low.

342. *Envyned* (O.Fr. *envinē*) = stored with wine.

343. *Bake* for *baken*, the old pp. of *bake*.

345. *Hit snewed*.—It abounded, to *sewe* or *snive* is still used in this sense in some parts of the country.

347. *After* = according to.

348. *Mete and soper* = food and drink. *Supper*, akin to *soup*, *sop*, and *sip*, so called because that meal was composed chiefly of liquids,

Ful many a fat partrich had he in mewē,
 And many a brem and many a luce in stewē. 350
 Woo was his cook, but-if his saucē were
 Poynaunt and scharp, and redy al his gere.
 His table dormant in his halle alway
 Stood redy covered al the longē day.
 At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire. 355
 Ful oftē tyme he was knight of the schire.
 An anlas and a gipser al of silk
 Heng at his gerdel, whit as mornē mylk.
 A schirreve hadde he ben, and a countour;
 Was nowher such a worthi vavasour. 360
 An HABERDASSHERE and a CARPENTER,
 A WEBBE, a DEYERE, and a TAPICER,

349. *Mewe*.—Originally a place where hawks were kept while moulting; then a coop where fowls were fattened; and lastly, any place of confinement or concealment.

350. *Luce* = a pike. Fr. *lucē*, Lat. *lucius*, a pike.

Stewe.—A fishpond, an important appendage to a house in Roman Catholic times, when religion required abstinence from other animal food on so many days in the year. The moats of castles were often well stored with fish.

351. *Woo*.—Adj. woeful; but-if, unless.

352. *Poynaunt*.—Piquant.

353. *Table dormant*.—The early tables were merely boards on trestles: tables *dormant* or permanently fixed to their legs were introduced about this time, and standing in the hall were looked on as evidences of open hospitality.

355. *Sessiouns*.—The county courts.

357. *Anlas* or *anlace*, a knife; and *gipser*, a pouch used in hawking or worn by gentlemen in civil attire.

359. *Schirreve* = shire reve, sheriff.

Countour.—O Fr. *comptour*, auditor of accounts or treasurer.

360. *Vavasour*.—A subvassal, one who held, as did most of the old English freeholders, under a tenant of the king. A middle class of landholders.

361. *Haberdasshere*.—A dealer in small articles, hats, buttons, silks, &c. &c. Probably from O. Fr. *haber d'achetz*, *avoir d'acheter*, to keep on sale.

362. *Webbe*.—Webber, now weaver. Ger. *weber*. Properly *webster* is the fem.

Tapicer.—A dealer in rugs, &c. Fr. *tapis*, a carpet, from *la tapete*, a carpet, tapestry.

And they were clothed alle in oo lyveré,
 Of a solempne and gret fraternité.
 Ful freissh and newe here gere apiked was; 365
 Here knyfes were i-chaped nat with bras,
 But al with silver wrought ful clene and wel,
 Here gurdles and here pouches every del.
 Wel semed eche of hem a fair buttys,
 To sitten in a geldehalle on the deys. 370

363. *Lyveré* = livery. The dress worn by servants and members of guilds. It means anything, whether clothing or food, *delivered* by a superior to his dependants. A man-servant's livery is not his own, but lent to him by his master; a livery stable is one where the fodder is served out from a common store. A baron was said to have livery of his manors and feudal holdings, that is, to have them formally delivered to him by the king on his making proof of age, legitimacy, &c.

Distinctive badges, called liveries, in the form of hats, scarves, hoods, and so on, were adopted not only by the retainers but by the entire faction and supporters of the turbulent barons in their private quarrels, a practice forbidden by several statutes in the reigns of Edward III., Richard II., and Henry IV., which permitted their use only by *bona fide* servants and the members of trade guilds, to one of which these citizens belonged. "*A solempne* (see note on line 274) *and gret fraternité*."

365. *Here gere apiked was*.—Their dress, or rather their accoutrements as one might say, were cleaned and polished. "*Purgatus* = *pykyd* or *purgyd fro fylthe and other thynges grevows*." *Prompt. Parvul.*

366. *I-chaped*.—With chapes or plates of metal; theirs were not brass but silver, they were therefore not petty tradesmen or artisans, to whom the use of the precious metals and jewels was forbidden.

368. *Del* = part or portion. Cf. *dole*.

370. *To sit on a dais in a guildhall*.—The etymology of the French *dais* or *deis* is doubtful. It seems originally to have meant a canopy over a state seat or table, then the seat or table itself, and lastly the raised platform on which the table stood. Cotgrave defines "*dais* or *dais*, a cloth of estate, canopy or heaven, over the heads of princes' thrones; also the whole state or seat of estate;" and Matthew Paris, *De Vit. Abbat. St. Albani*, says that the newly elected abbot dined alone in the refectory, the prior dining at the great table which we commonly call the *dais*.

Everych man for the wisdom that he can,
 Was schaply for to ben an alderman.
 For catel haddē they inough and rentē,
 And eek here wyfēs wolde it wel assentē;
 And ellēs certeyn hadde thei ben to blamē. 375
 It is ful fair for to be clept *madamē*,
 And for to gon to vigilies byforē,
 And han a mantel riallyche i-borē.

A Cook thei haddē with hem for the nonēs,
 To boyllē chiknēs with the mary bonēs, 380
 And poudre-marchaunt tart, and galyngale.
 Wel cowde he knowe a draugt of Londone ale.
 He cōwdē rostē, sethē, broille, and frie,
 Maken mortreux, and wel bakē a pye.

371. *That he can.*—That he knows.

372. *Schaply.*—Shapely, fit morally or materially.

373. *Catel and rente.*—Property and income qualifying them for the office. *Chattels* and *cattle* are from the O.Fr. *chatel* or *catel*, movable property, and this from the Mid. L. *catallum*, *captale* or (*negotium*) *capitale*, whence also our *capital*. The L. *captale* was later used of cattle.

377. On the eves of festivals, or vigils, the people used to meet in the churchyard for drinking and revelry, accompanied by their wives, the richer women having their best mantles carried by servants as well for show as for protection, if needed, against the weather.

378. *Riallyche*=royally.

379. *For the nones.*—For the nonce, for that once. The *n* belongs to the def. pronoun, of which it is an old dative sign.

380. *Mary bones.*—Marrow-bones.

381. *Poudre-marchaunt tart*=a tart or acid flavouring powder.

Galyngale.—The aromatic and astringent root of the *Cyperus longus*, a kind of sedge found, though now rarely, in the south of England. The genus is abundantly represented in warmer climates.

382. *London ale* was at that time held in high esteem, as Burton is now. The earliest mention of the latter that I have met is in Ray and Willoughby's *Itinerary*.

384. *Mortreux*, mortrewes or mortress. So called from being pounded in a mortar. *Mortreux de chare*, a kind of thick soup of which the chief ingredients were fowl, fresh pork, bread crumbs, eggs, and saffron; and *mortrewes of fysshe*, containing the roe or milt of fish, bread, pepper, and ale.

But gret harm was it, as it thoughtȝ me, 385
 That on his schyne a mormal haddȝ he;
 For blankmanger that made he with the bestȝ.
 A SCHIPMAN was ther, wonyng fer by westȝ:
 For ought I woot, he was of Dertȝmouthe.
 He rood upon a rouncey, as he couthe, 390
 In a gowne of faldyng to the kne.
 A dagger hangyng on a laas hadde he
 Aboutȝ his nekke under his arm adoun.
 The hotte somer had maad his hew al broun;
 And certainly he was a good felawe. 395
 Ful many a draught of wyn had he y-drawe

385. *It thoughtȝ me.*—Methought, it seemed to me.

386. *Schyne* = shin or skin.

Mormal=*mort mal*, a deadly disease, a cancer, or more probably an ulcerated leg.

387. *Blankmanger* = blanc mange, white food, a compound of minced chicken, eggs, flour, sugar, and milk, that he could make with (or against) the best (of his fellow-cooks).

388. *Wonyng*.—Living or dwelling. A.S. *wunian*, Ger. *wohnen*, to dwell. A loss to our language.

By westȝ.—In the west, westward.

389. *Dertȝmouthe*.—To be pronounced Dartmouth, so Derby is Darby.

390. *Rouncey*.—Fr. *roncin*, a heavy road or cart horse. *As he couthe.*—As well as he could. With fewer conveniences of travelling, riding was a more general accomplishment than it is now among landmen, but Chaucer cannot resist a joke at the expense of the sailor.

391. *Faldyng*.—A coarse rough napped cloth made in Northern Europe.

392. *Laas*.—O.Fr. *laz* or *laqs* (L. *laqueus*), a lute or strap. Cf. *anlas*, line 357.

394. Perhaps an allusion to the unusually hot summer of 1351.

Hew, now *hue*, originally meant form but afterwards was limited to colour.

395. *Good felawe*.—A jovial companion.

396–400. Many a cask of wine had he stolen by night from Bordeaux, though not always without meeting resistance.

Chapman.—The merchant (Ger. *kaufmann*) to whom the wine belonged. O.H.G. *chaufan*, M.H.G. *kaufen*, O.N. *kaupan*, A.S. *ceapian* = to buy or barter; *chaffer*, to make a bargain; *chop*, in “chop and change;” and *cheap*, are all from the same root.

From Burdeux-ward, whil that the chapman sleep.
 Of nyȝ conscience took he no keep.
 If that he fouhte, and hadde the heiher hand,
 By water he sente hem hoom to every land. 400
 But of his craft to reknē wel his tydēs,
 His stremēs and his daungers him biadēs,
 His herbergh and his mone, his lodemenagē,
 Ther was non such from Hullē to Cartagē.
 Hardy he was, and wys to undertakē; 405
 With many a tempest hadde his berd ben schakē.
 He knew wel alle the havenes, as thei were,
 From Gootlond to the cape of Fynystere,

401. There was none of his craft besides him between Hull and Cartagena in Spain who could so well reckon on, or was so well acquainted with the details of seamanship. The *his* before *tydes* seems to refer to craft, in other words to mean *its*.

403. *Herbergh*.—Harbour. The primary idea contained in this word is that of accommodation, and it is only in English that it is used of a port or haven for ships. In every other language it means a lodging or inn for travellers. The It. *albergo*, Sp. *albergue*, and the O.Fr. *herberge* are from the Low L. *herebergium*; but this has no origin from the classic language, and was like many other words borrowed from the German mercenaries in Rome, or the Gothic conquerors of the later empire. *Her* is an army, *bergen* is to shelter or hide. In Dr. Krensius's *Urteutsche Sprache*, *herebirga* is defined as *heerlager* = a camp, and *herberga* or *alberga* as *inquartirung*, *gastung* = quarters or inn. Our English *verb* to *harbour* retains the original sense of to afford lodging. The French *havre*, from the same root as our *haven*, is a different word. *Havan* in O.H.G. = a pot or vessel of any kind.

Mone.—The moons as affecting the tides.

Lodemenage.—Art of steering or piloting his ship into port; *lode* = to lead or guide, as in *lodestar* the pole-star, and *lodestone* the magnet. *Lode manage* occurs in statute 3 Geo. I. c. xiii., by which courts of lode manage are to be held at Dover for the appointment of the Cinque Port pilots. *Menage* or *manage*, through the French from L. *manus*, a hand = handling.

406. *Berd* = beard.

408. *Gootlond*.—Jutland (j pronounced as y), or Gothland in Sweden, chief town Gottenburg.

And every cryk in Bretayne and in Spaynē;
 His barge y-cleped was the Maudelaynē. 410
 Ther was with us a DOCTOUR OF PHISIK,
 In al this world ne was ther non him lyk
 To speke of phisik and of surgerye;
 For he was grounded in astronomye.
 He kepte his pacient wonderly wel 415
 In hourēs by his magik naturel.
 Wel cowde he fortunen the ascendēt
 Of his ymāges for his pacient.
 He knew the cause of every maladye,
 Were it of cold, or hoot, or moyste, or drye, 420

409. *Cryk*.—Creek, harbour.

410. *Barge*.—We should now say *barque* or *bark* for a sea-going ship, and *barge* for a river boat of burden or state. The words are the same.

413. *Phisik*.—From Gr. *physis*, nature, means properly the study of the laws of nature; and of late what was during the ascendancy of the Baconian philosophy known as natural philosophy has been more correctly styled physics. The name of *physician*, however, is deserving of being retained, implying as it does that he should be a student of nature, a man of science in the widest sense.

Surgerye.—Formerly *chirurgie* (from Gr. *cheir*, a hand, and *ergon*, work), the manual and mechanical part of the healing art.

414. *Astronomye*.—Or rather *astrology*, which in the dark ages constituted an important part of the popular medicine.

416-418 *Magik naturel*.—Chaucer alludes to this practice in his *House of Fame*, ll. 169-180:—

“Ther saugh I pleyen jugelours

And clerkes eek, which konne wel
 Alle this magike naturel,
 That craftely doon her ententes
 To maken in certeyn ascendentes
 Ymages, io! thurgh which magike
 To make a man ben hool or ayke.”

417. *Fortunen* is here a verb. *Ascendent* = the sign of the zodiac under which one was born.

420. The four humours or states, to one or other of which all diseases were referred.

And where engendred, and of what humour;
 He was a verrey parfigt practisour.
 The cause i-knowe, and of his harm the rootē,
 Anon he gaf the sykē man his bootē.
 Ful redy hadde he his apotecaries, 425
 To sende him draggēs, and his letuaries,
 For eche of hem made other for to wynnē;
 Here friendschipe nas not newē to begynnē.
 Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,
 And Deiscorides, and eeke Rufus; 430
 Old Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;
 Serapyon, Razis, and Avycen;
 Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn;
 Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.

424. *Boote*.—Remedy. Cf.: "what boots it?" i.e. what advantageth it?

425. *Apotecaries*.—Apothecary, from Gr. *apothēkē* a storehouse, is literally a storekeeper, though by custom applied only to a retailer of drugs, in classic Greek *pharmakopōlēs*.

426. *Dragges*.—Now spelled *drugs*. Cotgrave explains the French *dragée* as *dragge*, a warm digestive powder used by persons of weak stomachs after food, and hence comfits or aromatic preserves taken at the end of a meal. Though the word is found in all Romance languages, and is unknown in German, H. Tooke derives it from A.S., &c., *drugan*, to dry, as if it meant dried herbs, roots, or juices, and adduces the phrase "A *drug* in the market," understanding it to mean something *dried up* and spoilt.

Letuaries.—It. *lettuario*, electuary, commonly derived from *electus*, as if made of choice or selected ingredients. Since the word is now at least applied to medicines made in the form of a paste or jam, Holland would propose as the etymology, Gr. *ekleigma*, something to be licked, thus making it equivalent to our *linctus*, a thick medicated syrup.

427. The doctor and the apotecaries mutually recommended and helped one another, a practice now expressly forbidden to members of the London College of Physicians.

429-434.—The writers here mentioned were the chief medical authorities in the middle ages, with the exception of *Æsculapius*, the reputed founder and patron divinity of the medical art, though, according to *Homer*, he was simply the "blameless physician," whose sons *Machaon* and *Podalirius* practised with the Grecian army before

Of his dietẽ measurable was he,
 For it was of no superfluitẽ,
 But of gret norisching and digestible.
 His studie was but litel on the Bible.

Troy. His descendants formed a caste of priestly physicians under the name of Asclepiadæ, who transmitted the secrets of their art orally. Chaucer is in error in supposing that any works attributed to him were extant.

Dioscorides, a physician and botanist, born at Anazarba in Cilicia in the first century of the Christian era. He wrote on *materia medica*, taking nearly all his remedies from the vegetable kingdom.

Rufus, a celebrated anatomist who lived at Ephesus in the reign of Trajan, who discovered the cerebral nerves, and wrote on the structure of the eye and kidney.

Hippocrates (Ypocras as he was called by mediæval writers), the most eminent, and deservedly so, of Greek physicians, born at Cos, and died at Larissa in Thessaly, B.C. 361, in his ninety-ninth year. His works which are still extant show extraordinary powers of observation and good sense.

Avicenna or Ebn Sina, an Arabian physician and commentator on Aristotle, lived in the eleventh century, as did his countrymen *Haly* (Alhazen) the astronomer, and *Serapion*.

Galen, whose reputation was second only to that of Hippocrates, was born in Pergamus, A.D. 131. After studying in Egypt he practised first in his native city and then in Rome, but being driven thence by the jealousy of his less successful rivals returned to Pergamus until recalled by special mandate of the Emperor Augustus, to whose son Commodus he was appointed medical attendant. Five folio volumes of his works are preserved, but even that is but a small portion of his writings.

Rhazes or Allubecar Mohammed, born at Khorassan about A.D. 850, was chief of the hospital at Bagdad, and the first to give a distinct account of the smallpox which appeared in Egypt in the reign of the Caliph Omar.

Averroes or Aven Rosh, an Arabian philosopher and physician of the twelfth century, wrote among other works a paraphrase of Plato's *Republic*. His talents led to his appointment as governor of Morocco by the Caliph Jacob Almanzor, but he suffered much persecution on account of supposed heretical opinions.

John of Guddesden, physician to Edward III., the first English-

- In sangwin and in pers he clad was al,
 Lyned with taffata and with sendal. 440
 And yit he was but esy of dispence;
 He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
 For gold in phisik is a cordial;
 Therefore he lovede gold in special.
 A good Wif was ther of bysidē BATHE, 445
 But sche was somdel deaf, and that was skathe.
 Of cloth-makyng sche haddē such a haunt,
 Sche passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.

man who held the position of royal physician. His work on medicine, entitled *Rosa Anglica*, is full of absurdities, and shows how low the art had sunk since it fell into the hands of the clergy.

Bernardus Gordonius, professor of medicine at Montpellier, was also Chaucer's contemporary.

Constantius Afer, a native of Carthage, and afterwards a monk of Monte Cassino, was one of the founders of the celebrated school at Salerno, the first regular medical college in Europe.

Johannes Damascenus was an Arabian physician of the ninth (?) century, and *Gilbertyn* is supposed by Warton to be the famous *Gilbertus Anglicus*.

439. *Sangwin and pers*.—Blood red and peach (blossom) colour. *Peach*, Fr. *pêcher*, It. *pescà*, L. *malum persicum* = Persian apple. (Pliny, *N. H.* xii. 9.)
 440. *Taffata*.—A thin silk.
 Sendal.—A rich thin silk (or* according to Palsgrave a fine linen) used for lining.
 441. *Esy of dispence*.—Moderate in his expenditure.
 442. Acquired during the late pestilence of 1348-49.
 445. *Wif*, like the Ger. *weib*, means a married woman. The word is used rather in opposition to a maid than as correlative of husband.
 Byside = near.
 446. *Somdel*.—Some deal, somewhat.
 Skathe = misfortune. A.S. *scæthan*, Goth. *skathjan*, Ger. *schaden*, to injure. We retain the word in *scathing* and *unscathed*. The Germans use *schade* as we do pity, in "What a pity!"
 447. The west of England was early celebrated for its cloth, and still retains a high reputation for the excellence of its broad cloths.
 Haunt here means skill, practice.
 448. *Ypres and Gaunt* (Ghent).—The great seats of the Flemish cloth works.

In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
 That to the offryng byforn hire schulde goon, 450
 And if ther dide, certeyn so wroth was sche,
 That sche was thanne out of alle charité.
 Hire keverchefs ful fynë weren of groundë;
 I durstë swere they weyyeden ten poundë
 That on the Sonday were upon hire heed. 455
 Hire hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
 Ful streyte y-teyed, and schoos ful moyste and newë.
 Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewë.

450. When the parishioners on Relic Sunday went to the altar to kiss the relics.

Schulde.—Might presume to.

453. *Keverchefs; couvre chef*.—Kerchief, covering for the head, like the Sp. *mantilla*, an essential part of female attire, and on the decoration of which much care was bestowed. From some illuminations of the period the head-gear seems to have been padded. In a satire on the follies of the ladies of the Elizabethan age, entitled *The Anatomy of Abuses*, 1585, we read "They have also other ornamentes besides these to furnishe forthe their ingenious heades, to the ende, as I think, that the clothe of golde, clothe of silver, or els tinsell (for that is the worst wherewith their heads are attired withall underneath their caules) may the better appear and shew itselfe in the bravest maner, so that a man that seeth them (their heades glister and shine in such sorte) would thinke them to have golden heades. . . . Then have they petticoates of the beste clothe than can be made. And sometimes they have clothe neither, for that is thought too base, but of scarlet, grograine, taffatie, silke, and such like, fringed about the skirtes, with silke fringe of changeable colour. But which is more vayne, of whatsoever their petticoates be, yet must they have kirtles (for so they call them) either of silke, velvett, grograine, taffatie, satten or scarlet, bordered with garde lace fringes, and I cannot tell what besides. Their netherstockes in like maner are either of silke, iearnsey, worsted, crewell, or, at least, of as fine yearne thread or clothe as is possible to be hadde; yea they are not ashamed to weare hose all kinde of changeable colours as green, red, white, russet, tawny, and elswat."

457. *Moyste* = supple leather.

Sche was a worthy womman al hire lyfe,
 Housbondës attē chirche dore hadde sche fyfe, 460
 Withouten other companye in youthē;
 But therof needeth nougt to speke as nouthē.
 And thries hadde sche ben at Jerusalem;
 Sche haddē passed many a straungē streem;
 At Romē sche hadde ben, and at Boloynes, 465
 In Galice at seynt Jame, and at Coloyne.
 Sche cōwdē moche of wandryng by the weyē.
 Gat-tothed was sche, sothly for to seyē.
 Uppon an amblere esely sche sat,
 Y-wympled wel, and on hire heed an hat 470
 As brood as is a bocler or a targē;
 A foot-mantel aboute hire hipēs largē,

459. *Worthy* does not imply moral worth, but means of a jovial easy disposition.

460. Marriages were celebrated at the church porch, as baptisms are properly now, whence the newly married couple proceeded to the altar, to communicate at the mass.

Fyfe husbands; suggested by the story of the woman of Samaria.

462. *As nouthe* = at present, *nouthē* = now then.

464. *Straunge streem* = foreign river.

465. *Boloynes* = Bologna, where was a famous image of the Virgin.

466. *In Galice at seynt Jame*.—At the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Galicia, whither the body of the apostle was believed to have been carried in a ship without a rudder.

Coloyne.—Cologne or Köln, where the bones of the three wise men, or, as the Roman Church calls them, the three kings, Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, who came from the East to see the infant Jesus, are believed to be preserved.

468. *Gat-tothed*.—This word has been variously spelled and explained as gap-, cat-, gat- (goat-) toothed, &c., and as meaning with spaces between the teeth, prominent toothed or with the lower jaw projecting, also lascivious. At any rate it refers to something conspicuous and unsightly in the arrangement of the teeth.

469. *Amblere*.—A quiet-going horse.

470. *Y-wympled*.—Having a wimpel or covering for the neck. O.G. *wimpelen*, to cover, Fr. *guimpe*. [*Gu* in French indicates derivation from a Teutonic *w*, as *war*, *guerre*.]

472. *Foot-mantel*.—Probably a riding petticoat.

And on hire feet a paire of sporës scharpë.
 In felaweschipe wel cowde sche lawghe and carpë.
 Of remedyes of love sche knew parchauncë, 475
 For of that art sche couthe the oldë dauncë.
 A good man was ther of religioun,
 And was a pourë PERSON of a toun;
 But riche he was of holy thought and werk.
 He was also a lerned man, a clerk 480
 That Cristës gospel truly woldë prechë;
 His parischens devoutly wolde he techë.
 Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
 And in adversité ful pacient;
 And such he was i-proved oftë sithës. 485
 Ful loth were him to cursë for his tythës;
 But rather wolde he geven out of dowtë,
 Unto his pourë parisschens aboutë,

473. *Spores* = spurs.

474. *Carpe* now means to find fault with, but in old writers to jest or chaff. It comes from a monkish use of the L. *carpere*; like the double meaning of our word *tease*, to tease wool, and to tease a person.

475. *Remedyes of love*.—Drugs and charms supposed to have the power of exciting or damping the passion. Ovid wrote a book on the subject.

476. *The olde daunce*.—The old game.

477. So in French, persons, male or female, belonging to the clergy or monastic orders are called "Religious."

478. *Person of a toun* = a parish priest. *Parson* = L. *persona ecclesie* (person of the church). "He is called parson (*persona*) because by his person the church, which is an invisible body, is represented."—*Blackstone*. *Impersonare* = to institute to a living.

480. See for *clerk* note on line 285.

482. *Parischens*.—Parishioners. Parish, Fr. *paroisse*, L. *parochia*, G. *parochia* (from *para* near, and *oikos*, house), the district around the house of the minister.

483. *Wonder* = wonderly, wonderfully.

485. *Sithes* = since. A.S. *sith* = time, pl. *sithan*. Cf. Ger. *zeit* = time, and *seit* = since.

486. *Loth* is an adjective. It was odious to him to excommunicate such as failed to pay the tithes.

487. *Out of dowe* = doubtless.

Of his offrynge, and eek of his substauncē.
 He cowde in litel thing han suffisancē. 490
 Wyd was his parisch, and houses fer asonder,
 But he ne lafťe not for reyne he thonder,
 In siknesse nor in meschief to visitē
 The ferrest in his parissche, moche and litē,
 Uppon his feet, and in his hond a staf. 495
 This noble ensample to his scheep he gaf,
 That ferst he wroughte, and afterward he taughtē,
 Out of the gospel he tho wordēs caughtē,
 And this figure he addede eek therto,
 That if gold rustē, what schulde yren doo? 500
 For if a prest be foul, on whom we trustē,
 No wonder is a lewed man to rustē;
 And schame it is if that a prest take kepe,
 A [foulē] schepperd and a clenē schepe;
 Wel oughte a prest ensample for to give, 505
 By his clenness, how that his scheep schulde lyve.

489. *Offrynge*.—The voluntary contributions of his parishioners.

Substaunce.—The income of his living.

490. He found sufficient for his simple wants in a small competence.

492. *Ne lafte not*.—Did not leave them or neglect to visit them.

493. *Meschief*.—Misfortune. There was an old word *bonchief*, correlative to this.

494. *Mochē and litē* = great and small.

495. *Uppon his feet*.—Unlike the monk.

502. *Lewed man*.—A layman. *Lewd* = *lay* (A.S. *læwd*, from a verb meaning to weaken), as opposed to *clerical* or *ecclesiastical* (*clericus*, see on line 285), had not the secondary meaning of immoral which it has acquired, in precisely the same way that *villain* has been degraded. The word *lay*, L. *laicus*, Gr. *laos* = the people, though synonymous with *lewed* in old, and having superseded it in modern English, is of a quite distinct origin, and is used by the members of each learned profession of the people outside.

503. *Take kepe*.—Guard or take care.

504. St. Chrysostom said, "It is a great shame for priests when laymen be found faithfuller and more righteous than they." See Bacon's *Invective against Swearing*.

He settē not his benefice to hyrē,
 And leet his scheep encombred in the myrē,
 And ran to Londone, unto seyntē Poulēs,
 To seeken him a chauntērie for soulēs, 510
 Or with a bretherhede to ben withholdē;
 But dwelte at hoom, and keptē wel his foldē,
 So that the wolf ne made it not myscarye.
 He was a schepperd and no mercenarie;
 And though he holy were, and vertuous, 515
 He was to sinful man nought despitous,
 Ne of his spechē daungerous ne digne,
 But in his teching dīcret and benignē.
 To drawē folk to heven by fairnesē,
 By good ensample, was his busynessē: 520

507. Did not leave his parish in charge of a deputy while he went in search of more lucrative employment.

510. *Chaunterie for soules*.—An endowment in cathedral and great churches by which a priest was paid for singing masses for souls according to the will of the founder. There were thirty-five such at St. Paul's Cathedral, served by fifty-four priests.—*Dugdale*.

511. *Withholde*.—P. part., maintained.

516. *Despitous*.—Scornful, contemptuous.

517. *Daungerous ne digne*.—Domineering nor dignified or haughty; for *daunger*, see Earle's *Philology of the English Tongue*, § 337; also note on line 663 of this poem. In the Prologue to *Melibeus*, Chaucer says—

"I wot you telle a little thing in prose,
 That oughte like you, as I suppose,
 Or elles certes ye be to *daungerous*."

In the *Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1—

"You stand within his danger, do you not?"

plainly means, "You are in his power."

Daungers or *dangers* in old records and statutes are equivalent to seigneurial rights, and secondarily escheats and forfeitures. It must be derived from *Dominus*, as *Dan* in Dan Chaucer, &c. Earle compares the almost synonymous phrases, "to be in another's power" or "at his mercy."

519. *By fairnesse*, i.e. by leading a fair or good life. One MS. has *cleneness*.

But it were eny persone obstinat,
 What so he were, of high or lowe estat,
 Him wolde he snybbē scharply for the nonēs.
 A battre preest I trowe ther nowher non is.
 He waytede after no pompe ne reverencē, 525
 Ne maked him a spiced consciencē,
 But Cristēs lore, and his apostles twelvē,
 He taught, and ferst he folwed it himselvē.
 With him ther was a PLOUGHMAN, was his brother,
 That hadde i-lad of dong ful many a fother. 530
 A trewē swynkere and a good was hee,
 Lyvyng in pees and parfyt charitee.
 God loved he best with al his hoolē hertē
 At allē tymēs, though him gamede or smertē,

522. *What so* = whatsoever, whoever.

523. *Snybbe* = snub. A Norse and Frisian word meaning to cut short.
 Cf. *snub* nose, and Prov. Eng. *snoup*, a blow on the head.

For the nones (two syllables).—Promptly, on the spot.

525. *Waytede after*.—Sought or looked for.

526. *Spiced conscience*.—Over-scrupulous, pharisaical as we should say.
 In a tract dated 1594 we read, "under pretence of spiced holiness;" and in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Mad Lover*, iii.,
 when Cleanthe offers a purse, the priestess says—

"Fie! no corruption

Cle.

Take it, it is yours;

Be not so *spiced*; it is good gold;

And goodness is no gall to the conscience."

527. *Lore* = teaching. A.S. *lār*, Ger. *lehre*.

529. This line illustrates the humble social origin of the secular clergy, which enabled them to act as mediators between the peasantry to whom they belonged by ties of blood, and the proud nobles over whom they in their spiritual character possessed more or less power.

530. *Fother*.—A cart-load. A. Sax. *fother*. The term *fodder*, like Ger. *fuder*, is still used for a weight of lead; lbs. 19½, 21½, or 22½ in different parts of England.

531. *Swynkere*.—Labourer. See line 188.

534. *Though him gamede or smerte*.—Whether it gave him pleasure or pain, i.e. whether his piety conduced to or conflicted with his worldly interests.

533-535.—Cf. Mark xii. 33.

And thanne his neighēbour right as himselvē. 535
 He woldē thresshe, and therto dyke and delvē,
 For Cristēs sake, with every pourē wight,
 Withouten hyre, if it laye in his might.
 His tythēs payede he ful faire and wel,
 Bothe of his ownē swynk and his catel. 540
 In a tabard he rood upon a mere.

Ther was also a Reeve and a Mellere,
 A Sompnour and a Pardoner also,
 A Maunciple, and my self, ther were no mo.

The MELLERE was a stout carl for the nonēs, 545
 Ful big he was of braun, and eek of boonēs;

536. *And therto dyke and delve* = and also make dykes or ditches and dig. *Dike* is now used only in a special sense, having been ordinarily superseded by the softened form *ditch*. *To dig*, originally to make a *dike* or *ditch*, has taken the place of the more general word *delve*, which has almost become obsolete; the noun *ditcher*, however, is retained for a man whose special work is to make ditches.

537. *Wight*.—See on line 71.

540. *Swynk and catel*.—In labour or service rendered, and in kind or produce. *Catel*.—See on line 373.

541. *Tabard*.—A smock or short jacket. See on line 20. *Mere* = a mare.

542. *Reeve*.—Steward or bailiff. A.S. *gerefa*, whence *shire-reeve* = sheriff, *port-reeve*, *borough-reeve*. Cf. Ger. *burggraf*, &c. This reeve was, as the account of him proves, merely the bailiff or steward of some nobleman. The connection between the Eng. *reve* and the German *graf* has been questioned, but the forms *grave*, *grefe*, *gerefe*, and *reve*, all occur in Dr. Kremsier's Old High German Dictionary, and are explained as *begleiter*, *graf*, *process*. *Mellere* = a miller.

543. *Sompnour*.—A summoner in the ecclesiastical courts, now called *apparitor*. The explanation of *p* in this word, as in the French *compter*, to count, is to be found in their Latin originals, *submoneo* and *computo*. In *solempne*, solemn, and *nem, me*, name, it has been introduced through false analogy.

Pardoner = a seller of indulgences. Indulgences were invented in the eleventh century by Pope Urban II., as rewards to those who went in person to the Holy Land; but they were afterwards sold for money, and the trade reached such a pitch of extravagance and scandal as to rouse the indignation of Luther, and thereby contributed in no small degree to hasten the Reformation.

544. *Maunciple*.—Caterer to a college. L. *maniceps*, a contractor.

545. *Carl*.—A.S. *cearl*, Icel. *karl*, Ger. *kerl*, a countryman, then a strong

That prevede wel, for overal ther he cam,
 At wrastlynge he wolde bere alwey the ram.
 He was schort schuldred, broode, a thikkē knarrē,
 Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve of harrē, 550
 Or breke it with a rennyng with his heed.
 His berd as ony sowe or fox was reed,
 And thereto brood, as though it were a spade.
 *Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
 A werte, and thereon stood a tuft of heres, 555
 Reede as the berstles of a souwēs eeres.
 His nosē-thurles blakē were and wydē.
 A swerd and bocler baar he by his sidē.

hardy fellow, lastly degraded into *churl*, like the corresponding term *villain*. The proper name *Charles*, Ger. *Carl* or *Karl*, is the same word.

546. *Braun*.—Originally, as here, simply muscle, but now used only of a particular dish of pork; the adjective *bravny*, however, retains the primary meaning.

547. *That prevede wel*.—Literally, proved well, *i.e.* served him well. Cf. L. *multum valere*, Fr. *beaucoup valoir*.

Overal ther.—Wherever. *Overal*, like the Ger. *überall* = everywhere, *ther* = where. Literally, everywhere where he came.

548. *The ram*.—The usual prize at wrestling-matches.

549. *Knarre*.—A thick-set fellow. O.E. *gnarr*, a knot, retained in the expression *gnarled*, said of an oak or other tree.

550. *Harre*.—O.E. *herre*, A.S. *heor*, a hinge.

Nolde.—Past tense of the verb *nyllan*, the negative of *willan*, as L. *nolle*, to be unwilling, of *velle*, to be willing; it is now obsolete. J. Wesley is perhaps the latest writer who has used the phrase, "whether he will or nill." The meaning of the line is, "There was no door that he would not heave off its hinges."

551. *Rennyng*.—Running, at a run.

554. *Cop*.—Tip or top. Cf. Ger. *kopf*, head. *Cob* nuts are the best, or as we might say colloquially, "tiptop nuts." *Coping* of a wall, *cap* on the head, *cobs* or large pitcoals, are kindred words. Rich and powerful men are called by Udall "the rich *cobs* of this world."

556. *Berstles* = bristles, by a common transposing of the letters. In German a brush is *bürste*.

557. *Nose-thurles*.—Now corrupted into *nostrils*. A.S. *thirlian*, to drill or pierce; *thirel*, a hole. *Drill*, *thrill*, *through*, and even *door*, are all from the same root.

His mouth as wyde was as a great forneys.
 He was a janglere, and a golyardeys, 560
 And that was most of synne and harlotries.
 Wel cowde he stelē corn, and tollen thries;
 And yet he had a thombe of gold pardé.
 A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.
 A baggēpipe wel cowde he blowe and sownē, 565
 And therwithal he brought us out of townē.
 A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a temple,
 Of which achātours mighten take exemple

559. *Forneys*.—Mr. Earle remarks that to Chaucer as a Kentish man furnaces were familiar objects, for the ironstone which abounds in the weald of Kent and Sussex was largely smelted, until the substitution of coal for wood as fuel transferred the industry to the Black Country and to Wales.

560. *Jangler* = a talker, babbler. An Old French word.

Golyardeys.—A buffoon at rich men's tables. Etymology unknown, unless from Golias, the assumed author of the *Apocalypsis Golie* and other pieces in burlesque Latin rime. The authorship has been attributed to one Walter Map. It was a popular jest-book of the twelfth century.

561. *That*, viz. his talk and jokes.

562. *Stele*.—Steal or appropriate part of the corn intrusted to him to grind, a practice common in the trade.

Tollen thries.—Demand payment over again.

563.—An immense amount of ingenuity has been expended in endeavours at explaining the proverb, "Every honest miller has a golden thumb;" but, "After all, is not the old proverb satirical, inferring that all millers who *have not golden thumbs* are rogues—argal, as Shakespeare says, that all millers are rogues?" (*Notes and Queries*, May, 1869, p. 407. Dr. Morris). If not, the most plausible notion involves an allusion to the advantage derived from a highly cultivated sense of touch in judging of the quality of meal by rubbing it between the fore finger and thumb, which latter becoming broad and flattened, has suggested the name of miller's-thumb for a well-known fish whose head has that peculiar form.

Pardé.—Fr. *par Dieu*, by God. Yet may imply that in spite of his roguery he was most prosperous.

565. *Baggēpipe*.—We are accustomed to look on this instrument as peculiarly Scottish, only because it has been retained longer by that people than by others. The earliest mention of the bagpipe in Scotland is an item for the pay of "*Inglis pyparis*" in the

For to be wys in byynge of vitaillē.
 For whether that he payde, or took by taillē, 570
 Algate he waytede so in his achate,
 That he was ay biforn and in good state.
 Now is not that of God a ful fair gracē,
 That such a lewēd mannēs wit schal pacē
 The wisdom of an heep of lernede men? 575
 Of maystres hadde moo than thries ten,
 That were of lawe expert and curious;
 Of which ther were a doseyn in that hous,

court of James IV. On a Greek sculpture now at Rome, and of great antiquity, is a representation of a man playing on a genuine bagpipe, and instruments made on the same principle are still used in Calabria and Transylvania.

Sowne.—Sound, a different word from *sowmen*, to tend or conduce to, occurring in line 307.

567. *A temple.*—The Inns of Court, so called, were anciently the residence of the Knights Templars. At the suppression of that order their buildings were purchased by the professors of common law, and divided into the Inner and Middle Temples, in relation to *Fesex* House, which, though not appropriated by the lawyers, was long known as the Outer Temple. By the expression "a temple," he would seem to mean simply any one of the Inns of Court.

568. *Achatour.*—A purchaser or caterer. Fr. *acheter* = to buy.

570. *Took by iaille.*—Bought on credit or by *tally*, originally an account scored in notches on a piece of wood, from Fr. *tailler* to cut, whence also our word *tailor*, as Ger. *schneider*, from *schneiden*, to cut.

571. *Algate* = always. *Gate* and *way* are from Scandinavian and German sources respectively. *Gata* in Swedish and Icelandic is way, path, or street. *Swagate* (i.e. so ways), thus, is found in O.E. Our word *gait* is another form.

Waytede so in his achate.—Watched or attended to his purchases.

572. *Ay biforn.*—Ever before (others).

573. Cf. James i. 17.

574. *Lewed.*—See on l. 502. *Wit.*—See on l. 279. *Pace* = pass or surpass.

576. The members of the Temple.

577. *Curious.*—Careful, studious, from *cura* = care. Also inquiring, and in a depreciatory sense prying, inquisitive. All these uses are found in Latin authors, and in English before the eighteenth century. Since that time the last only has been retained, though even it is obsolescent; and the word has most absurdly come to signify unusual, remarkable, quaint, or strange.

Worthi to ben stiwardes of rente and lond
 Of any lord that is in Engeland, 580
 To maken him lyve by his proprë good,
 In honour detteles, but-if he were wood,
 Or lyve as scarsly as him list desire;
 And able for to helpen al a schire
 In any caas that mightë falle or happë; 585
 And yit this maunciple sette here aller cappë
 The REEVë was a sklendre colerik man,
 His berd was schave as neigh as evere he can.
 His heer was by his eres ful round i-schorn.
 His top was dockëd lyk a preest biforn. 590
 Ful longë wern his leggës, and ful lenë,
 Al like a staff, ther was no calf y-senë.
 Wel cowde he kepe a gerner and a bynnë;
 Ther was non auditour cowde on him wynnë.
 Wel wiste he by the droughte, and by the reyn, 595
 The yeeldyng of his seed, and of his greyn.

579. *Stiwardes*.—A *steward*, or *stodeward*, is a keeper (*warder*) of the *stede* or establishment of his lord.

581. To enable him to live on his own private (*proper*) means.

582. *But-if he were wood*.—Unless he were mad. Our word *but* = *be-out*, like *except*, excluding such a thing or proposition; it is therefore not convertible with the Fr. *mais* = L. *magis*, preferably, commonly though erroneously considered as its equivalent; the two words corresponding only in a certain number of instances.

Wood. A.S. *wod*, *mæd*. *Wud* is still used in Scotland.

583. Co-ordinate with *line 581*, not with "*but-if he were wood*," which is parenthetical. *Him* refers to the steward: thus if the lord would only live as sparingly as it pleased his steward to desire or advise him.

584. *Al a* = a whole.

585. *Caas*.—Event or misfortune.

586. *Here aller cappe* = the caps of them (the lawyers) all. *To set a man's cap* meant to outwit, overreach, or surpass him. He outdid them all.

587. *Reeve* = a bailiff.

590. *Dockëd* in front (before), like the tonsure of a priest.

594. *Auditour* = accountant.

On him wyne.—Outmatch him.

His lordës scheep, his neet, and his dayerie,
 His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrie,
 Was holly in this reevës governynge,
 And by his covenaut gaf the rekenynge, 600
 Syn that his lord was twenti yeer of agð;
 Ther couthe noman bringe him in arreragð.
 Ther nas ballif, ne herde, ne other hyne,
 That he ne knew his sleight and his covyne;
 They were adrad of him, as of the dethð. 605
 His wonyng was ful fair upon an hethð,
 With grenð trees i-schadwed was his placð.
 He coudð bettrð than his lord purchacð.
 Ful riche he was i-storð prively,
 His lord wel couthe he plesð subtilly, 610
 To geve and lene him of his ownð good,
 And have a thank, a cote, and eek an hood.
 In youthe he lerned hadde a good mester;
 He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
 This reevð sat upon a ful good stot, 615

597. *Neet* = cattle. *Dayerie* (Old E. *deye*, a female servant) = dairy, the woman's department in the farm.

598. *Stoor*.—Farm stock. O.Fr. *estor*, Mid. L. *staurum*, store.

599. *Holly* = wholly.

602. *Arrerage* = arrears.

603. *Herde* = herdsman. The modern sense of a flock is the original one. *Hyne* = hind, farm-labourer.

604. *Sleight* = craft, astuteness, from Icel. *slegr* = sly. *Covyne* = deceit. O.Fr. *covin*, from L. *convenire*, to come between or together.

605. *Adrad*.—In dread. As *afeard* = in fear of.

606. *Wonyng*.—Dwelling. Ger. *wohnung*. See line 388.

609. *I-storð*.—From *stoor*, see line 598.

611. *Lene*, &c.—Lend to him of his own thrift.

613. *Mester* = trade. Fr. *métier*. Had learned his business well.

614. *Wrighte*.—*Wright* was originally a workman of any kind. Cf. *wheelwright*, *cartwright*, *playwright*. Akin to the verbal form *wrought*.

615. *Stot*.—A stallion, or sometimes a young horse (*Bailey's Dictionary*, 1735). In German, however, *stute* is a mare.

616. *Pomely* (*pomme*).—Same as *dappled* (*apple*), patched with colour like an apple.

That was a pomely gray, and hightē Scot.
 A long surcote of pers uppon he haddē,
 And by his side he bar a rusty bladdē.
 Of Northfolk was this reeve of which I tellē,
 Byside a toun men callen Baldeawellē. 620
 Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboutē,
 And ever he rood the hyndreste of the routē.
 A Sompnour was ther with us in that place,
 That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynēs face,
 For sawcēflem he was, with eyghen narwē. 625
 As hoot he was, and leccherous, as a sparwē,

617. *Pers*.—See note on line 439.

Uppon seems here to be used as an adverb: overall, outside.

620. *Byside* = near; not living in the town but in the country near it.

621. *Tukked aboute*.—Dressed up, from A.S. *tucian*, to clothe; C.E. *tuck*, Ger. *tuck*, cloth.

622. *Hyndreste* = hindmost. Cf. *overeste*, l. 290.

Route.—An O.Fr. word, Ger. *rotte*, a crowd; not the Mod. Fr. *route*, road or course.

623. *Sompnour*.—See line 543.

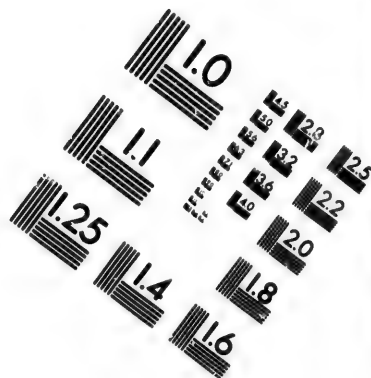
624. *Fyr-reed cherubynes face*.—H. Stephens, *Apol. Herod.* i. cap. 30, quotes the same expression from a French epigram: "Nos grands docteurs au cherubin visage." Comp. "His face was red as any cherubyn:" Thynne (ob. 1611 A.D.), *Debate between Pride and Lowlines*. Properly the singular is *cherub*, the plural *cherubim*.

625. *Sawcēflem* (or *sawcēflem*).—Having a red pimpled face. Tyrwhitt in his *Glossary* gives a quotation from the Bodl. MS. 2463 which explains the etymology of the word. "Unguentum contra *salsum flegma*, scabiem," &c., that is, an ointment against the salt phlegm, scab, &c. So Galen in Hippocrat. *De Aliment. Comment.* iii. p. 227, plainly points to a skin disease produced by the excessive use of salt food, so general among our forefathers. In the *Prompt. Parv.* we have *flew* and *fleume* as equivalents of *flegma*. Tyrwhitt quotes the term from an old French physis book, and also from the old work *A Thousand Notable Things*, "a sovereign ointment for *mausefleme*, and all kind of scabies."

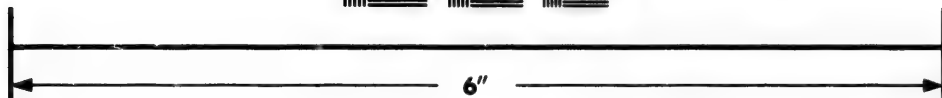
It may be well to remind the student that our word *sauce* is derived through the French from the It. *salso*, L. *salsus*, and means originally *salted* or *pickled* articles of food, and *sausage* is from the same.

Narwē = narrow.





A resolution test chart featuring several groups of horizontal and vertical lines of varying thicknesses. Each group is accompanied by a numerical value indicating the resolution. The values include 1.0, 1.1, 1.25, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.0, 2.2, 2.5, 2.8, 3.2, 3.6, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.6, 6.3, 7.1, 8.0, 9.0, 10, 11.2, 12.5, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22.5, 25, 28, 32, 36, 40, 45, 50, 56, 63, 71, 80, 90, 100, 112, 125, 140, 160, 180, 200, 225, 250, 280, 320, 360, 400, 450, 500, 560, 630, 710, 800, 900, 1000, 1120, 1250, 1400, 1600, 1800, 2000, 2250, 2500, 2800, 3200, 3600, 4000, 4500, 5000, 5600, 6300, 7100, 8000, 9000, 10000.



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With skallēd browēs blake and pilēd berd;
 Of his visagē children weren aferd.
 Ther nas quyksilver, litarge, ne bremstoon,
 Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartrē noon, 630
 Ne oynēment that woldē clense and bytē,
 That him might helpen of his whelkēs whitē,
 Ne of the knobbēs sitting on his cheekēs.
 Wel loved he garleek, oynouns, and ek leekēs,
 And for to drinkē strong wyn reed as blood. 635
 Thanne wolde he speke, and crye as he were wood.
 And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
 Than wolde he spekē no word but Latyn.
 A fewē termēs hadde he, tuo or thre,
 That he hadde lernēd out of som decree; 640
 No wonder is, he herde it al the day,
 And eek ye knowen wel, how that a jay

627. *Skallēd*.—Having the *scall* or scales, scurfy. Cf. vulg. "*scald* head."

Pilēd.—Bald or bare in patches. Norse *pila*, to pluck, thence the Fr. *pill*'r, to pillage. Cf. line 177, and note.

629. *Quyksilver*.—Quicksilver or mercury = living silver, so called from its mobility.

Litarge, or oxide of lead, Gr. *lithargyros* (*lithos*, a stone, and *argyros*, silver), silver-stone, from the presence in the ore of a certain amount of silver.

Bremstoon.—Brimstone; formerly *brynstan*, a Scandinavian word meaning burning-stone.

630. *Boras*.—Borax, or baborate of soda. From an Arabic word *bourach*.

Ceruce.—L. *cerussa*. White-lead or carbonate of lead.

Oille of tartre.—Probably cream of tartar, bitartrate of potash. *Tartar*, a fanciful name given by the alchemists to the dregs of anything, especially, and afterwards solely, to the crystalline deposit of impure bitartrate of potash which, under the name of *argal* or *argol*, is collected from the hogsheads in which wine has been long kept.

All the above-mentioned substances are or have been used in ointments or cosmetics,

632. *Whelkes*.—Blotches, scabs,

636. *Wodd*.—See on line 582,

Can clepen Watte, as wel as can the popë.
 But who so wolde in other thing him gropë,
 Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie, 645
 Ay, *Questio quid juris*, wolde he crye.
 He was a gentil harlot and a kyndë;
 A bettre felawe schulde men nowher fyndë.

643. Can say Watte or Walter, as a parrot says Poll.

644. *Him grope*.—"If any one knew how to try or test (his knowledge of Latin) in other things (than the phrases he had got by rote). *Grope* is to feel with the hands, akin to *grip*, *grab*, &c.

646. *Questio quid juris?*—This kind of question occurs frequently in Ralph de Hengham. After having stated a case, he adds, *quid juris?* and then proceeds to give the answer to it.

647. *Harlot*.—Two very different derivations have been proposed for this word, which is used by our older writers without limitation to either sex. Morris, Kington Oliphant, and several modern dictionary makers, would derive it from a Welsh word *herlawd*, meaning a young person. Much more probable seems to me the derivation given by the older authorities, Henshaw, Skinner, and Horne Tooke, and approved by Richardson and Angus, that it is simply *horelet*, a diminutive of *whore* (wrongly spelled with a *w*, being itself but the same as *hire*, as *meretrix* a *merendo*), and therefore identical with *hireling*, one of either sex hired for any purpose.

Assuming the identity of *harlot* with *hireling*, it would indicate first a menial or paid servant; then a person of low birth, habits, or tastes; lastly a female hired for immoral purposes. In this sense *harlootes*, in Tyndal's Bible, 1534, take the place of Wycliffe's *hooris*, 1380, in the parable of the prodigal son, Luke xv. 30. *Hireling* and *mercenary* have in like manner come to imply want of conscientiousness and selfishness in the person who serves for pay.

On the class of mediæval society variously designated as ribalds, harlots, and golyardeys Earle in his *Philology of the English Tongue*, § 54, says, "One of the ways, and almost the only way, in which a man of low birth who had no inclination to the religious life of the monastery could rise into some sort of importance and consideration was by entering the service of some powerful baron. He lived in coarse abundance at the castle of his patron, and was ready to perform any service of whatever nature. He was a

He woldē suffrē for a quart of wyn
 A good felawe to han his concubyn 650
 A twelve moneth, and excuse him attē fullē:
 And prively a fynch eek cowde he pullē.
 And if he fond owher a good felawe,
 He woldē techē him to have non awe
 In such caas of tne archēdeknēs curs; 655
 But-if a mannēs soule were in his purs;
 For in his purs he scholde y-punyssched be.
 "Purs is the ercēdeknēs helle," quod he.
 But wel I woot he lyede right in dede;
 Of cursyng oghte ech gulty man him drede; 660
 For curs wol slee right as assoillyng saveth;
 And also ware him of a *significavit*.

rollicking sort of a bravo or swashbuckler. He was his patron's parasite, bulldog, and tool."

Wycliffe translates the *scurrilitas* of the Vulgate by *harlotrie*, and Shakespeare in the same sense speaks of *harlotry* players.

Gentil and kynde.—That is, though a "harlot" he was not a bully, but a genial, jovial sort of fellow. *Kind* has but recently acquired the sense of tender-hearted. It meant originally natural, as in the Litany, "the kindly fruits of the earth;" and in Sir Thomas More's *Life of King Richard III.* we are told how he murdered his two nephews in order that he might be accounted a "kindly king" [!], that is, the legitimate sovereign, being in their absence the next in succession to the throne, the natural heir.

648. *A bettre fellawe*.—A jollier companion; in a somewhat disparaging sense.

652. *Pulle a fynch* (pluck a finch or pigeon) was a proverbial expression for cheating a novice.

653. *Owher*.—Anywhere.

656. *But-if* = unless. The meaning of the passage is, he would teach his companions not to stand in awe of the archdeacon's curse or excommunication, since if he were not too much set on his money, he might purchase exemption.

659-662. Chaucer himself does not look on excommunication as a joke, but considers that the spiritual injury inflicted by it is as real as the blessing conferred in absolution.

661. *A soillyng*.—Fr. *assoiller*, L. *absolvere*, absolution.

662. *Ware him*.—Warn him, bid him beware of. *Significavit*.—A writ

In daunger he hadde at his ownē gise
 The yongē gurlēs of the diocise,
 And knew here counseil, and was al here reed. 665
 A garland had he set upon his heed,
 As gret as it were for an alē-stake;
 A bokeler had he maad him of a cake.
 With him ther rood a gentil PARDONER
 Of Rouncival, his frend and his comper, 670
 That strayt was comen from the court ef Romē.
 Ful lowde he sang, Come hider, lovē, to me.
 This sompnour bar to him a stif burdoun,
 Was nevere trompe of half so gret a soun.
 This pardoner hadde heer as yelwe as wex, 675
 But smothe it heng, as doth a strike of flex;

"*De excommunicato capiēdo*," which usually began "*Significavit nobis venerabilis frater*," &c.

663. *In daunger*.—In his jurisdiction, or here rather in his power. See l. 517.

At his owne gise.—After his own fashion. *Guise* is the same as *wise* in *likewise*, *otherwise*.

665. *Al here reed*.—The adviser of them all. Cf. Ger. *rath*, *geheimrath*.

666, 667. *A garland*.—Probably of ivy. An ivy bush was affixed to the signboard (the *ale-stake*) of taverns, for a picture of which see Hotten's *Book of Signboards*. The proverb "Good wine needs no bush" means, no sign to recommend or call attention to it.

668. A burlesque fancy in keeping with his roistering jovial character.

670. Tyrwhitt has this note: "I can hardly think that Chaucer meant to bring his pardoner from Roncevaux in Navarre, and yet I cannot find any place of that name in England. An hospital Beate Marie de Rouncyvalle, in Charing, London, is mentioned in the *Monast.* tom. ii. p. 443; and there was a Runceval Hall in Oxford (Stevens, vol. ii. p. 262). So that it was perhaps the name of some fraternity."

His frend and his comper.—A sly hit at the character of the pardoner.

672. *Come hider*, &c.—Probably the burden of some song.

673. Sang to him or accompanied him in a deep bass. Fr. *bourdon*, the name of a deep organ-stop.

674. There was never a trumpet of so deep a sound as the sompnour's voice.

676. *Strike* or hank of flax, as if *stroked* or spread out.

By unces hyngē his lōkkēs that he haddē,
 And therwith he his schuldres overspraddē.
 Ful thinne it lay, by culpons on and oon,
 But hood, for jolitee, ne werede he noon, 680
 For it was trussēd up in his walēt.
 Him thought he rood al of the newē get,
 Dischevelē, sauf his cappe, he rood al bare.
 Suche glaryng eygen hadde he as an hare.
 A vernicle hadde he sowēd on his cappē. 685
 His walet lay byforn him in his lappē,
 Bret ful of pardouns come from Rome al hoot.
 A voys he hadde as smale as eny goot.

677. *Unces*.—*Uncia*, in Latin, is the twelfth part of anything; an ounce = one twelfth of a pound, an inch one-twelfth of a foot. Then *unce* in English, as *uncia* in Latin, was used for a small quantity. Here it means probably tufts.

679. *Culpons*.—Shreds, bundles. Fr. *coupon*, from *couper*, O. Fr. *colper*, to cut.

682. *Him thought*.—The old impers., retained only in *methinks*; the pronoun is in the dative, and the meaning is, it seemed to him, not he thought.

He rood.—He rode.

Al of the newe get.—All in the newest fashion.

683. *Dischevele* = Fr. *dechevelé*, with the hair (*cheveux*, L. *capilla*) hanging loose. *Sauf his cappe*.—Saving or except his cap, for he wore no hood, as was explained in line 680.

685. *Vernicle*.—A veronicle or miniature copy of the likeness of our Lord on a relic known as St. Veronica's handkerchief, preserved in St. Peter's at Rome. The legend is that she was a holy woman who followed our Lord to Calvary wiping the sweat from his brow with a napkin, on which a picture of his features afterwards miraculously appeared. Facsimiles or copies of relics were sold or given to pilgrims, who kept them as evidences of the various shrines they had visited. See *Piers Plowman* (ed. Skeat), A. p. 67:—

"A bolle and a bagge he bar by his syde;
 An hundred of ampulles on his hat seten,
 Signes of Synay, and shelles of Galice,
 And many a crouche on his cloke, and Keyes of Rome,
 And the vernicle bifore, for men sholde knowe
 And se bi hise signes, whom he sought hadde."

687. *Bret ful of pardouns* = brimful of indulgences. A Norse word: Sw. *bräddfull*, A.S. *brerd*, brim.

No berd hadde he, ne never scholdē havē,
As smothe it was as it were late i-schavē; 690

But of his craft, fro Berwyk into Ware,
Ne was ther such another pardoner.
For in his male he hadde a pilwebeer,
Which that he saide, was ourē lady veyl: 695

He seide, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That seynt Peter haddē, whan that he wentē
Uppon the see, till Jhesu Crist him hentē.
He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stonēs,
And in a glas he haddē piggēs bonēs. 700

But with thise reliques, whannē that he fond
A pourē persoun dwellyng uppon lond,
Upon a day he gat him more moneye
Than that the persoun gat in monthēs tweye.
And thus with feyned flaterie and japes, 705

He made the persoun and the people his apea.
But trewely to tellen attē laste,
He was in churche a noble ecclesiaste.
Wel cowde he rede a lessoun or a storye,
But altherbest he sang an offertorie; 710

For wel he wystē, whan that song was songē,
He mostē preche, and wel affyle his tongē,

692. *Berwyk into Ware*.—If this be really what Chaucer wrote it is not easy to understand why he did not name some town further south.

694. *Male*.—O.Fr., *malle*, Mod. Fr., a bag or large package. Cf. *mail-coach* or train. It has in English become so associated with the postal service that we use the repetition *mail-bag*, as if mail meant letters.

Pilwebeer.—A pillow-case. Cf. Dan. *vaar*, a cover.

696. *Gobet*.—Dim. of *gob*, a piece.

698. *Hente*.—Seized or took hold of. A.S. *hanten*.

699. *Croys of latoun*.—A cross of brass. Fr. *laiton*, brass.

702. *Persoun* = parson, not person.

705. *Japes*.—Tricks, impostures.

709. *Storye*.—From the lives of the saints or such like legends.

712. *Affyle*.—File or polish. Fr. *affiler*.

To wynnē silver, as he right wel cōwdē:
 Therefore he sang ful meriely and lowdē.

Now have I told you schortly in a clause 715
 Thestat, tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
 Why that assembled was this companye
 In Southwerk at this gentil ostelrie,
 That highte the Tabbard, fastē by the Bellē.

But now is tymē to yow for to tellē 720
 How that we bare us in that ilkē night,
 Whan we were in that ostelrie alight;
 And after wol I telle of oure viagē,
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimagē.

But ferst I pray you of your curtesie, 725
 That ye ne rette it nat my vileinye,
 Though that I speke al pleyn in this matere,
 To tellē you here wordēs and here cheere;
 Ne though I speke here wordēs proprely.

For this ye knowen al so wel as I, 730
 Who so schal telle a tale after a man,
 He moot reherce, as neigh as evere he can,
 Everych a word, if it be in his chargē,
 Al speke he nevere so rudelychē and largē;

Or ellēs he moot telle his tale untrewē, 735
 Or feynē thing, or fyndē wordēs newē.

713. *Wynne* = gain. *Cowde*.—Knew how to.

716. *Thestat, tharray*.—The estate, the array, i.e. the social position, and the dress, &c., of each.

719. *The Belle*.—Thomas Wright says that he can find no mention of such an inn in that place, though Stowe speaks of one near the Tabard with the sign of the Bull.

721. How we conducted ourselves in that same night. A.S. *ylc*, Scot. *ilk*.

722. *Were alight* = had alighted at. A.S. *alihtan*, to descend.

726. *Ne rette*.—The Ellesm. MS. has "narrette;" *rette* or *arette* means to ascribe, deem, impute. Icel. *retta*, to set right (from *rettr* = right), in A.S. *aretan*. It has no connection with *arrest*, Fr. *arrêter* (from L. *restare*), which means to cause to stop, in O.E. *arresten*.

The sense of this line is, "that you do not ascribe it to my ill-breeding or coarseness"—*vileinye*, as we should say vulgarity.

728. *Here cheere*.—Their expression or behaviour.

734. *All*.—Here as in l. 744 = although. *Large*.—Same as *broode*, l. 739.

He may not spare, although he were his brother;
 He moot as wel sey oo word as another.
 Crist spake himself ful broode in holy writ,
 And wel ye woot no vileinye is it. 740
 Eke Plato seith, who so that can him redē,
 The wordēs mot be cosyn to the dedē.
 Also I pray you to forgeve it me,
 Al have I nat set folk in here degré
 Here in this tale, as that thei schuldē stondē; 745
 My wit is schorte, ye may wel understandē.
 Greet cheerē made oure host us everichon,
 And to the souper sette he us anon;
 And servede us with vitaille attē bestē.
 Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us lestē. 750
 A semely man our hoost he was withallē
 For to han been a marschal in an hallē;
 A largē man was he with eygen stepē,
 A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepē:

739. *Broode*.—We still speak of a "broad joke," meaning one rather coarse or vulgar.

741. Chaucer drew this saying of Plato from Boethius de Cons. Phil. lib. iii. par. 12.

742. *Cosyn*.—Kindred, *i.e.* the words must correspond to the things described.

Chaucer's purpose in writing these tales being to depict the manners, morals, and character of every class in the middle grades of society, and at the same time to expose the vices and hold up to ridicule the impostures of the religious orders, he felt himself constrained to give a plain and unvarnished description without reticence or disguise, although he might by so doing unavoidably lay himself open to the charge of coarseness and even of obscenity.

744, 745. He has not concerned himself with questions of precedence, or at least has attempted only an approximate order.

750. *Wel us leste*.—It pleased (*lusted*) us well to, &c.

752. *Marschal in an halle*.—Steward in a college or hall. *Marshal* = Fr. *maréchal*, from L.L. *mariscalcus*, and that from O. Ger. *marah*, a horse, and *scal* (Mod. Ger. *schalk*), an attendant, is one of those titles which have undergone the most diverse changes of meaning.

754. The wealthiest burgeses or citizens of London lived in Cheapside.

Bold of his speche, and wys and well i-taught, 755
 And of manhedē him lakkede right naught.
 Eke therto he was right a mery man,
 And after soper playen he bygan,
 And spak of myrthe amongēs othre thingēs,
 Whan that we haddē maad oure rekenyngēs; 760
 And saydē thus; "Lo, lordynges, trewēly
 Ye ben to me right welcome hertily:
 For by my trouthe, if that I schal not lye,
 I saugh nogt this yeer so mery a companye
 At oonēs in this herbergh as is now. 765
 Fayn wold I don yow mirthē, wiste I how.
 And of a mirthe I am right now bythought,
 To doon you eese, and it schal costē nought.
 Ye goon to Caunturbury; God you speedē,
 The blisful martir quyte you youre meedē! 770
 And wel I woot, as ye gon by the weyē,
 Ye schapen yow to talen and to pleyē;
 For trewēly comfort ne merthe is noon,
 To rydē by the weye domb as a stoon;
 And therfore wol I maken you disport, 775
 As I seyde erst, and do you som confort.
 And if yow liketh alle by oon assent
 Now for to standen at my juggēment;

761. *Lordynges*.—A dim. of *lords*. Not an uncommon term of civility, when we should now say gentlemen.

765. *Herbergh*.—Inn. See line 403, and note.

766. *Fayn*.—Gladly. A.S. *fegan*, O.E. *fawen*, to be glad.

Don yow mirthe.—Entertain you. *Don*, inf. of *do* = *do-en*.

770. *Quyte you youre meede* = give you your reward. *Blisful martir*, see line 17. *Med*, *mede*, or *meede* = reward, is akin to Ger. *miethe*, and is seen in *midwife*, a woman paid (for a certain duty). *Quyte*, in *requite* and *acquit*, and in the expression "to get or be quit of," is the L. *quietus*, quiet, at rest, thence free of (all claims).

771. *Ye gon*.—You go, pres. plural.

772. *Ye schapen yow*.—You will purpose or prepare yourselves. A.S. *scapan*, to create or form. *Gesceap*, creation. Cf. Ger. *schöpfung*, creation. *To talen* = to tell *talen*

And for to werken as I schal you seyð,
 To morwð, whan ye riden by the weyð, 780
 Now by my fader soulð that is deed,
 But ye be merye, I wol yeve myn heed.
 Hold up youre hond withoutð morð spechð."
 Oure counseil was not longð for to sechð;
 Us thoughte it nas nat worth to make it wys, 785
 And graunted him withoutð more avys,
 And bad him seie his verdite, as him lestð.
 "Lordynges," quoth he, "now herkneth for the bestð;
 But taketh it not, I pray you, in disdayn;
 This is the poynt, to speken schort and playn, 790
 That ech of yow to schortð with oure weið,
 In this viage, schal tellð talðs tweyð,
 To Caunturburi-ward, I mene it so.
 And hom-ward he schal tellen other tuo,
 Of aventùres that whilom han bifallð. 795
 And which of yow that bereth him best of allð,
 That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
 Tales of best sentence and of most solas,

782. *But* = unless, if you be not.

Heed = head = my sense or advice, not caution, as in the phrase "to give or take heed," although that may be originally from the same word. Cf. *heed* in this line with *hond* in the next.

782. *I wol yeve*.—Harl. MS. only reads *smyteth of*.

783. *Hond*, so Harl. Ellesmere, and Corpus; all others read *hondes*.

784. *Seche* = seek. Ger. *suchen*.

785. *To make it wys* = to make it a matter of wisdom or serious deliberation.

786. *Graunted*.—Assented or yielded.

Avys = advice, consideration. O.Fr. *avis*, It. *avviso*, from L. *ad*, to, and *video*, *visum*, to see.

787. *Verdite*.—Verdict, opinion. L. *verum dictum*.

788, 789. *Herkneth, taketh*.—Second pers. plu.

791. *To schorte* = shorten.

795. *Whilom*.—A.S. *hwilum*, from A.S. *hwile* = time. The *um* or *om* is an adverbial termination or old case-ending, seen in *seldom*, and O.E. *ferrum*, from *afar*. *Whilom* means, therefore, "once on a time."

798. *Sentence*.—L. *sententia*, judgment, good sense.

Withouten eny lengere taryngē.
 A morwē whan the day bigan to spryngē,
 Up roos oure host, and was our alther cok,
 And gadered us togidre alle in a flok,
 And forth we riden a litel more than paas, 825
 Unto the waterynge of seint Thomas:
 And there oure host bigan his hors arestē,
 And seyde; "Lordes, herkneth if yow lestē.
 Ye woot youre forward, and I it you recordē.
 If even-song and morwē-song acordē, 830
 Lat se now who schal tellē ferst a tale.
 As evere I moote drinkē wyn or ale,
 Who so be rebel to my juggement
 Schal paye for al that by the weye is spent.
 Now uraweth cut, er that we ferrer twynnē; 835
 He which that hath the schortest schal bygynnē."
 "Sire knight," quoth he, "my maister and my lord,
 Now draweth cut, for that is myn acord.
 Cometh ner," quoth he, "my lady prioressē;
 And ye, sir clerk, lat be your schamfastnessē, 840
 Ne studieth nat; ley hand to, every man."
 Anon to drawen every wight bigan,

822. *A morwe*.—On the morrow, the 18th of April.

823. *Oure alther cok*.—Cook for us all. See note on line 799.

825. At little more than a foot or walking pace.

826. The watering of St. Thomas was at the second milestone on the old Canterbury road. It is frequently mentioned by the early dramatists.

827. *Areste*.—To pull up, bring to rest.

829. *Ye woot youre forward*.—You know your promise. *Forward*=
A.S. *foreweard*, a covenant or agreement made beforehand.

831. *Lat se*.—Let us see.

835. *Draweth cut*.—Draw lots; second pers. plur. Froissart says "*tirer a longue paille*," lots drawn by pulling the longest straw from a stack; so cuts mean the broken lengths of the straws.

836. *Ferrer*, so Ellesmere and Heng., others read *ferther*.

Twynne.—To depart, literally to part in twain.

840. *Sir* was a common appellation of clergy, at least of the secular, who were not Father or Brother.

Let be your modesty or shyness. *Shamefast*, modest, is like

And schortly for to tellen as it was,
 Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,
 The soth is this, the cut fil to the knight, 845
 Of which ful glad and blithe was every wight;
 And telle he moste his tale as was resoun,
 By forward and by composicioun,
 As ye han herd; what needeth wordës moo?
 And whan this goode man seigh that it was so, 850
 As he that wys was and obedient
 To kepe his forward by his fre assent,
 He seyde; "Syn I schal bygynne the game,
 What, welcome be thou cut, a Goddes name!
 Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seyð." 855
 And with that word we riden forth oure weyð;
 And he bigau with right a merie chere
 His tale anon, and seide in this manere.

steadfast, and has been erroneously spelled *shamefacedness* in 1 Tim. ii. 9.

842. *Wight*.—See on line 71.

844. *Aventure, or sort, or cas*.—*Sort* (L. *sors*), *cas* (L. *casus*), are almost synonymous words, as luck and chance.

845. *Soth*.—The truth. Cf. *soothsayer*.

847. He must, as was reasonable.

848. *Forward*.—See line 829.

Composicioun.—Agreement or arrangement. This sense is still retained in speaking of bankruptcy: *compounding* or effecting a *composition* with one's creditors.

850. *Seigh* = *saw*. The final *w* (as in *saw*) often points to a guttural either in A.S. or allied Teutonic languages.

853. *Syn*.—Since.

Schal bears here its original meaning of moral compulsion or duty, as in German, where also *schuld* is a debt or obligation.

854. *A Goddes name*.—In God's name.

GLOSSARY.

- A**, on, in. *A morwe*, line 822. *A Goddes name*, line 854.
Able, fit, capable, 167.
Acorde, agreement, 244, 830.
Achate, **achatour**, purchase, purchaser, 571, 568.
Adrad, in dread, 605.
Aferd, afraid, 628.
Affyle, to polish, 712.
Al, although, 734. *Al be*, 297.
Ale-stake, sign of a tavern, 667.
Algate, always, 571.
Al so, as, 730.
Alther, **aller**, of all (in composition), 586, 716, 799, 823.
Amblere, a nag, 469.
A morwe, to-morrow, or in the morning, 822.
Anlas, a dagger, 357.
Anon, **anoon**, in one (in ant), 32.
Ancynt, anointed, 199.
Ape, ape, or metaphorically a fool, a dupe, 706.
Apiked, trimmed, 365.
Areste, to stop (a horse), 827.
Arive, disembarkation (of troops), 60.
Arrerage, arrears, 602.
Arwe, arrow, 104.
As nouthe, as now, at present, 462.
Assoillyng, absolution, 661.
Atte, at the, 29, 193, 651, 707, 749.
Avaunce, to be of advantage, to profit, 246.
Avaunt, boast, 227.
Aventure, luck, chance, adventure, 25, 795.
Avys, consideration, 783.
Ay, ever, 63.
Bachelor, an unmarried man, 80.
 The other uses of the word are discussed in the note.
Bar, **baar**, **bore**, 153, 558, 618; conducted, 105, 721.
Barres, ornaments of a girdle, 329.
Bawdrik, a crossbelt, 116.
Bede, bead (prayer), 159.
Beggere, **beggestere**, a beggar (lit. one who carries a bag), 242, 252. (*Beggestere*, prop. a female beggar.)
Berd, beard, 270.
Bere, to bear, carry, conduct one's self, 709.
Berstles, bristles, 556.
Besy, busy, 321.
Bet, better, 242.
Betwixe, **betwixt**, between, 277.
Bifalle, befallen, 795.
Bisette, to employ, use, 279.
Blak, black, 557.
Blankmanger, **blancmange**, a compound, minced fowl, cream, sugar, and flour, 387.
Bledde, bled, 145.
Blisful, blessed, 17, 770.
Bokeler, **bocler**, buckler, 112, 471, 668.
Boon, bone, 546.
Boot, **boote**, remedy, 424.
Boras, borax, 630.
Bord, joust, tournament, or table. See note 52.
Born, conducted, 87.
Botes, **bootes**, boots, 203, 273.
Bracer, armour for the arms, 111.
Braun, muscle, 546.
Breed, **bred**, bread, 147.
Breke, to break, 551.
Brem, a bream, 350.
Bremstoon, brimstone, 629.
Brest, **breste**, breast, 115.
Bret ful, brimful, 687.
Breth, **breethe**, breath, 5.
Bretherhede, brotherhood, 511.
Broch, broach, 160.
Brood, **broode**, **brode**, broad, 155, 471, 549.
Broode, broadly, plainly, 739.
Broun, brown, 109.

- Burdoun**, a musical accompaniment, 673.
Burgeys, burgess, 369.
Busynesse, care, anxiety, labour, 520.
But-if, unless, 351, 582.
Byfel, byfil, befell, 19.
Byfore, byforn, before, 377, 450.
Bygan, bigan, began, 44.
Bygonne, begun, 52.
Bygynne, to begin, 42.
Bynne, bin, chest, 593.
Byside, beside, near, 445.
Bysmotered, unmuttered, 76.
Byt, bids, 187.
Bythought, have called to mind, 767.
Byynge, buying, 569.
Caas, cas, chance, 585, 844.
Caas, case in law, 823.
Cappe, cap, hood, 536.
Carf, carved, 100.
Carl, churl, 545.
Carpe, to talk, 474.
Catel, wealth, chattels, 373, 540.
Ceruce, ceruse, white-lead, 630.
Chapeleyn, a chaplain, 164. See n.
Chapman, a merchant, 397.
Chaunge, change, 343.
Chaunterie. See note 510.
Cheere, appearance, manners, face, cheer, 139, 723.
Chevysaunce, gain, profit, an agreement for borrowing money, 282. See note.
Chikne, chicken, 380.
Chivachie, a military expedition, raid, 85.
Chyvalrye, chivalry, exercises and exploits of knighthood, 45.
Clapsed, clasped, 273.
Cleere, clearly, 170.
Clene, cleanly, 133.
Clennesse, cleanness, purity of life, 506.
Cleuse, to cleanse, 631.
Clepen, to call, 121, 643.
Clept, called, 376.
Clerk, a learned man, student at the university, 285.
Cofre, coffer, chest, 298.
Comper, a close companion, 670.
Composicioun, bargain, agreement, 843.
Confort, comfort, 776.
Conscience, feeling, pity, 142, 150.
Coote, cote, coat, 103, 612.
Cop, top or tip of anything, 554.
Cope, cape, 260.
Corage, heart, 11; spirit, 22.
Cours, course, 8.
Courtepy, a short coat, 290. See n.
Couthe, cowthe, cowde, could, 236, 326; knew, 467; knew how to, 95, 106, 110.
Covyne, deceit, fraud, 604. See n.
Coy, quiet, 119.
Croys, cross, 699.
Crulle, curly, 81.
Cryk, creek, 409.
Culpons, shreds, bundles, 679.
Cuntre, country, 216.
Cuppe, cup, 134.
Curat, one who has "cure of souls," 219. See note.
Cure, care, 303.
Curious, careful, 577. See note.
Curteys, courteous, 99, 250.
Cut, lot, 835. See note.
Daliaunce, gossip, small talk, 211.
Daunger, position of danger, hence jurisdiction or power, 402. See n.
Daungerous, domineering, 517.
Dayerie, dairy, 597.
Dayesye, daisy, 332.
Dede, deed, 742.
Deed, dead, 145.
Deef, deaf, 446.
Degre, station in life, 40.
Delite, delyt, luxury, pleasure, 335 and note, 337.
Delve, to dig, 536.
Delyver, active, nimble, 84.
Despitous, cruel, merciless, 516.
Dethe, death, 605.
Dette, debt, 280.
Detteles, free from debt, 582.
Devys, opinion, decision, 816.
Devyse, describe, 34.
Deyere, dyer, 362.

Deys, table of state, 370. See note.
Deynte, dainty, valuable, 168.

Lit. toothsome.

Diete, diet, 435.

Digne, worthy, 141; proud, disdainful, 517.

Dischevele, with hair hanging loose, 683.

Dispence, expenditure, 441.

Docked, cut short, 590.

Domb, dumb, 774.

Dome, decision, judgment, 323.

Don, doon, to do, cause, make, 78, 268, 768.

Dong, dung, 580.

Dore, door, 460.

Dorste, durst, dare, 227.

Doseyn, a dozen, 578.

Dowte, doubt, fear, 487.

Dragges, drugs, 426. See note.

Drede, to dread, 660.

Dresse, to set in order, 106. See n.

Dronken, drunk, 135, 687.

Drope, a drop, 131.

Dyke, to make ditches, 536. See n.

Ecclesiaste, an ecclesiastic, 708.

Ech, eche, each, 39, 369.

Echoon, each one, 820.

Eek, also, 5, 41.

Eeres, ears, 556.

Eese, pleasure (ease), 768.

Elles, else, 375.

Embrowded, embroidered, 89.

Encombred, troubled, in danger, 508.

Endite, to dictate, 95.

Enfecte, tainted (by bribery), 320.

Entuned, intoned, 123.

Envyned, stored with wine, 342.

Ercedekne, archdeacon, 658.

Eschaunge, exchange, 278.

Esed, accommodated, entertained, 29.

Estat, estate, state, condition, 203, 522.

Estatlich, **estatly**, **stately**, 140, 281.

Esy, easy, 223; moderate, 441.

Everych, **everich**, **every**, 241; each, 371.

Everych a, **each**, **every**, 733.

Everychon, **everichon**, **every**-one, 31, 747.

Eyen, **eyghen**, eyes, 152, 627.

Fader, father, 100, 781 (genitive).

Faire, neatly, gracefully, 94, 124, 273.

Fairnesse, honesty of life, 519.

Faldyng, coarse cloth, 391. See note.

Falle, befell, 585.

Famulier, familiar, homely, 215.

Farsed, stuffed, 233. See note.

Fayn, gladly, 766.

Fedde, fed, 146.

Felawe, fellow, companion, 650. See note.

Felaweschipe, company, 32.

Fer, far, 388, 491. *Ferre*, *ferrier*, farther, 48, 835. *Ferrest*, farthest, 494.

Ferne, either distant or ancient, 14. See note.

Ferthing, fourth part, hence a very small portion of anything, 134, 255.

Festne, to fasten, 195.

Fet, fetched, 819.

Fetys, neat, well-made, 157. See n.

Fetysly, neatly, properly, 124.

Feyne, to feign, 705.

Fil, fell, 131, 845.

Fithel, fiddle, 296. See note.

Flex, flax, 676.

Floytynge, playing on a flute, 91.

Foo, foe, 63.

For, because, 443; for fear of, 276.

Forgeve, forgive, 743.

Forheed, forehead, 154.

Forneys, furnace, 202.

For-pyned, wasted away, tormented, 205.

Forster, forester, 117.

Forther, further, 36.

Fortunen, to make fortunate, 417.

Forward, compact, agreement, 83, 829.

Fother, a load, 530.

Foughten, fought (p. part.), 62.

Fowle, fowel, fowl, 9, 190.

Freedom, liberality, 46.

Frend, friend, 299.

Fro, from, 324.

Fyr-red, fiery red, 624.

- Gader**, to gather, 824.
Gaf, gave, 177.
Galyngale, sweet cyperus, 381.
Gamede, pleased, 534.
Gat, got, 703, 704.
Gat-tothed. See note on 468.
Gauded, ornamented, 159.
Geldehalle, guildhall, 370. See n.
Gentil, noble, 72.
Gepoun, a short cassock, 75.
Gere, gear, 352.
Gerner, garner, 593.
Gesse, to guess, suppose, 82, 117.
Get, fashion, 682.
Gete, to get, 291.
Geve, give, 223, 225.
Gipser, a pouch, 357.
Gise, fashion, way, 663.
Gobet, morsel, piece, 696.
Golyardeys. See note on 560.
Goost, ghost, spirit, 205.
Goot, goat, 688.
Goune, gown, 93.
Governaunce, management of affairs, control, 281.
Governynge, control, 599.
Graunte, grant, consent to, 736.
Greece, grease, 135.
Gret, greet, great (comp. *gretter*, sup. *gretteste*), 84, 120, 137, 197.
Greyn, grain, 596.
Grope, to try, test, 644.
Grys, a gray fur, 194.
Gulty, guilty, 660.
Gurles, young people of either sex, 664.
Gynglyng, jingling, 170.
Haberdasshere, a hatter (Gascoigne), 381. See note.
Haburgeoun, a small hauberk or coat-of-mail, 76. See note.
Hade, had, 554.
Halwes, saints, 14. See note.
Happe, to happen, befall, 585.
Hardily, certainly, 156.
Harlot, a young person of either sex, or more probably a hireling, 647. See note.
Harlotries, rihaldries, 561.
Harneysed, equipped, 114.
Harre, a hinge, 550.
Haue, to have, 245.
Haunt, practice, skill, 447.
Heed, head, 198, 455, 782.
Heeld, held, 337.
Heep, assembly, host, 575.
Heer, here, hair, 555, 589.
Heere, to hear, 169.
Heethe, heth, a heath, 6, 606.
Heih, &c., high, 316.
Heiher, upper, 399.
Helpen of, to get rid of, 632.
Heng, hanged, 160, 358.
Hente, get, take hold of, 299, 698.
Herbergh, lodging, 403, 765. See note.
Herde, a herdsman, 603. See note.
Here, of them, their, 11, &c. **Hein**, them, 18, &c.
Herkne, to hearken, 823.
Herte, heart, 150.
Hertily, heartily, 762.
Hethen, heathen, 66. See note.
Hethenesse, heathen lands, 49.
Heve, to heave, raise, 550.
Hider, hither, 672.
Highte, was called, 616, 719.
Hipes, hips, 472.
Hire, her, 120, &c.
Hit, it, 345, &c.
Holden, esteemed, held, 141.
Holly, wholly, 599.
Holte, wood, grove, 6.
Holwe, hollow, 289.
Hond, hand, 108.
Honest, creditable, respectable, becoming, 246.
Hoole, whole, 533.
Hoom, home, 400.
Hoomly, homely, 323.
Hoost, host, 751.
Hote, hotly, 97.
Hors, horse, 74, (plur.) 598.
Hostelrie, an inn, 23.
Hostiler, innkeeper, 241.
Hotte, hot, 394.
Hous, house, 343.
Householdere, householder, 889.
Hyndreste, hindmost, 622.
Hyne, servant, hind, 608.
Hynga, hung, 677.

- I**, a prefix denoting the past part of verbs, and represented in other Teutonic languages by *y*, *ge*, &c.
- I-bore**, borne, carried, 378.
- I-chaped**, having chapes or plates of metal, 386.
- I-falle**, fallen, 25.
- I-go**, gone, 286.
- I-knowe**, known, 423.
- I-lad**, led, 530.
- I-pynched**, plaited, 151.
- I-schadwed**, shaded, 607.
- I-schave**, shaven, 690.
- I-schorn**, shorn, 589.
- I-schreve**, shriven, 226.
- I-stored**, stored, 609.
- I-vaught**, 127.
- I-proved**, 485.
- I-write**, 161.
- See also **Y**.
- Ilke**, same, 64, 175.
- Inne**, in, 41.
- Inough**, enough, 373.
- Jangler**, a prater, babbler, 500.
- Jape**, trick, jest, 705.
- Jolitee**, joy, 680.
- Jugge**, judge, 814.
- Juste**, to joust or tilt, in tournament, 96.
- Keep, kepe**, care, attention, heed, 398, 503.
- Kene**, keen, sharp, 104.
- Kept**, guarded, taken care of, 276.
- Keverchef**, kerchief, 453.
- Knarre**, a thick-set fellow, 549.
- Knobbe**, a pimple, 633.
- Kouthe**, known, renowned, 14.
- Kynde**, natural, genial, 647.
- Lafte**, left (past, sing.), 492.
- Large**, free, 734.
- Lat**, imperative of let, cease, 188.
- Late**, lately, recently, 77, 690.
- Lazer**, lazar, a leper, 242, 245.
- Leed**, a cauldron, 202.
- Leet**, let, 128, 508.
- Lene**, lean, poor, 287, 591.
- Lenger**, lengere, longer, 830, 821.
- Lerne**, to learn, 308.
- Leste**, pleasure, 132.
- Letuaries**, electuaries, 426. See **n**.
- Lewed**, ignorant, lay, 502. See note.
- Ley**, to lay, 81, 841.
- Licenciat**. See note 220.
- Licour**, liquor, 3.
- Lipsede**, lisped, 264.
- List**, **Leste**, it please, vb. impera., 583, 750.
- Litarge**, litharge, 629. See note.
- Lite**, little, humble, 494.
- Lodemenage**, pilotage, 403. See **n**.
- Lokkes**, locks of hair, 81.
- Lond**, **londe**, land, 14, 194, 702.
- Longen**, to desire, long for, 12.
- Lore**, doctrine, precepts, learning, 527.
- Loth**, unwilling, 486.
- Luce**, a pike fish, 356.
- Lust**, pleasure, 192.
- Lust**, pleased, 102.
- Lusty**, pleasant, merry, 80.
- Lyf**, life, 71.
- Lyk**, like, alike, 590.
- Lymytour**. See note 209.
- Lystes**, place of encounter at tournaments, 63. See note.
- Lyvere**. See note 363.
- Maad**, made, 394, 668.
- Maister**, **maystre**, master, 261, 576.
- Maistrie**, power, superiority, 165.
- Male**, a bag, 694. See note.
- Maner**, **manere**, manner, kind, sort of, 71, 858.
- Manhede**, manliness, 756.
- Many oon**, many a one, 317.
- Marschal**, marshal, 752. See note.
- Mary**, marrow, 380.
- Maïere**, matter, 727.
- Maunciple**, caterer of a college, 544.
- Mede**, a meadow, 89.
- Mede**, **meed**, **meede**, &c., reward, 770.
- Medlé**, of a mixed colour, medley, 828.
- Meke**, meek, 69.
- Mellere**, miller, 542.
- Men**, one (as "one calls it"), 149.
- Mene**, to mean, intend, 793.
- Mere**, mare, 541.
- Merle**, **mery**, **merye**, &c., merry, pleasant, 208, 757.

Meriely, pleasantly, 714.
Merthe, mirth, pleasure, amusement 766, 767, 773.
Mescheef, meschief, misfortune, 493.
Mester, trade, occupation, 613.
Mesurable, moderate, 435.
Meta, food, 136. See note.
Mewe, coop for fattening fowls, 349.
Mo, moo, more, 544.
Moche, mochil, much, great, greatly, 132, 258, 467.
Mone, moone, moon, 403.
Moneth, month, 92.
Moot, mot, must, may, ought, 232, 735, 742.
Mormal, an ulcer, 386. See note.
Mortreux, a kind of soup, 384. See note.
Morwe, morning, morrow, 334, 180.
Moste, must, 712.
Motteleye, motley, 271.
Nacioun, nation, 53.
Narwe, narrow, 625.
Nas, ne was, was not, 251.
Nat, not, 366, &c.
Natheles, nevertheless, 35.
Ne, not, 70, &c. *Ne...*, but, only, 120.
Neede, needful, 304.
Neet, neat (cattle), 597.
Neigh, near, 588.
Nekke, neck, 238.
Ner, nearer, 839.
Newe, newly, recently, 365.
Nightertale, night time, 97.
Nogt, not, 253, &c.
Nolde, ne wolde, would not, 550, &c.
Nombre, number, 716.
Nomoo, no more, 101.
Non, noon, none, 178, &c.
Nones, nonce, 379, 523.
Nonne, nun, 118.
Noot, not, ne wot, know not, 234, &c.
Noote, a musical note, 235.
Nose-thurles, nostrils, 557. See n.
Not-heed, aroundcropped head, 109.
Noug, not, 107.
Nouth, just now, 462.

Offertorie, the sentences of Scrip-

ture read during the offertory in the church, 710.
Offryng, the alms collected at the offertory, 450.
Ofte sithes, often times, 485.
Oghte, ought, 680.
On, oon, one, 143, 253, 304, 738.
On and oon, one by one, 679.
Ony, any, 552.
Oones, once, 765.
Or, ere, before, 36.
Ostelrie, an inn, 722.
Oth, oath, 810.
Over-al, everywhere, 216.
Overeste, uppermost, 290.
Overlippe, upper lip, 133.
Overspradde, overspread, 678.
Owher, anywhere, 663.
Oynement, ointment, 631.
Cynouns, onions, 634.
Paas, pas, a foot pace, 825.
Pace, to pass on, 36; surpass, 574.
Pacient, a patient, 484.
Palfray, a roadster horse, 207. See n.
Pard, pardee, par dieu (an oath), 563.
Pardon, a seller of indulgences, 543.
Parlgt, perfect, 422, 532.
Parischen, parishioner, 482.
Partrich, partridge, 349.
Parvys. See note on 310.
Passe, to surpass, 443.
Peire, pair, 159.
Perce, pierce, 2.
Perfigt, perfyt, perfect, 72, 338.
Pers, a pale blue, 439.
Persoun, parson, parish priest, 478.
Peyne, peynen, to take pains, endeavour, 139.
Piked. See *Apiked*.
Piled, bald, 627.
Pilwebeer, a pillow-case, 694.
Pitaunce. See note on 224.
Pitous, compassionate, 143.
Playn, plain, 790.
Plentyuous, plentiful, 344.
Plese, to please, 610.
Pleye, playen, to play or enjoy one's self, 236, 772.

- Pleyn**, plain, full, 315, 327.
Pocok, peacock, 104.
Pomely, dappled, 616.
Poraille, the poor, 247.
Port, carriage, behaviour, 69.
Post, pillar, support, 214.
Poure, pore, poor, 225, 478.
Poudre marchaunt, a mixture of spices, 381.
Powre, to pore over, 185.
Poynaunt, pungent, 352.
Practisour, practitioner, 422.
Preche, to preach, 481.
Preve, to put to proof, 547.
Pricasour, a hard rider, 189.
Prike, to excite, spur on, 11.
Prikyng, riding, 191.
Pris, prys, prize, 237; price, 815; estimation, 67.
Prively, secretly, 652.
Propre, peculiar, own, 581.
Puile, to pluck, 652. See note.
Pulled, moulting, 177.
Pultrie, poultry, 598.
Purchas, anything acquired (honestly or not), proceeds of begging, 256.
Purchasour, prosecutor, 318.
Purchasyng, prosecution, 320.
Purpled, embroidered, fringed, 193. See note.
Purs, purse, 656.
Purtray, portray, draw, 96.
Pynche, find fault with, 326.
Quyte, free, 770.
Raughte, reached, 136.
Reccheles, reckless, careless, 179.
Recorde, remind, 829.
Rede, reed, line of conduct, 665 (literally counsel).
Rede, to read, 709.
Redy, ready, 21, 352.
Reed, reede, red, 90, 153, 458.
Reeve, steward, balliff, 542, 599. See note.
Reherce, to rehearse, 732.
Rekenynge, reckoning, 800.
Rekne, reckon, 401.
Remenaunt, remnant, 724.
Rennyng, running, 551.
Rente, income, profits, 373.
Repentaunt, penitent, 298.
Reportour, reporter, 814.
Resons, reasons, opinions, 274.
Rette, ascribe, impute, 726.
Reule, rule, 173.
Reverence, respect, 141.
Rewle, to rule, 816.
Reyn, reyne, to rain, 492, 595.
Reyse, to make a military expedition, 54.
Rially, riallyche, royally, 378.
Riden, to ride, 780, 825.
Rood, rode, 169, &c.
Roos, rose, 823.
Roost, a roast, 206.
Roote, rote, 327. See note on 236.
Roste, to roast, 147, 383.
Rote, a guitar, or some stringed instrument, 236.
Rouncy, a hack horse, 390.
Route, a company, 622.
Rudelyche, rudely, 734.
Sangwyn, blood-red colour, 333.
Sauce, saucer, deep plate, 129.
Sauf, save, except, 683.
Saugh, saw, 193, 764.
Sawceflem, pimped, 625. See n.
Sawtrie, a psaltery or harp, 296.
Sayn, to say, 284.
Scarsly, sparingly, 583.
Schamfastnesse, modesty, 840.
Schape, to plan, purpose, 772, 809.
Schaply, fit, likely, 372.
Schave, shaven, 588.
Scheeldes, crowns (a coin), 278.
Schene, bright, fair, 115.
Schipman, a seaman, sailor, 388.
Schire, shire, county, 15.
Schirreve, sheriff, or governor of a shire, 359.
Scholde, schulde, should, 249, 506, &c.
Schon, shone, 198.
Schoo, shoe, 253.
Schorte, to shorten, 791.
Schuldre, shoulder, 678.
Schuldred, having (such) shoulders, 549.

Schyne, shin, leg, 386.
 Scole, school, 125.
 Scoler, scholar, 200.
 Scoley, to attend school, study, 320.
 Seche, seeke, to seek, 17, 784, &c.
 Seek, seeke, sick, 18.
 Seide, said, 183, &c.
 Seie, seye, to say, 787.
 Seigh, saw, 850.
 Seint, saint, 173.
 Seith, saith, 173.
 Selle, to give, sell, 278.
 Selle, a cell or house, 172. See note.
 Semely, seemly, elegant, 123, 130, 751.
 Sen, sene, seen, seene, to see or be seen, 134, &c.
 Sendal, a thin silk, 410. See note.
 Sentence, sense, meaning, judgment, 306, 798.
 Servysable, willing to be of service, 99.
 Sesoun, season, 19.
 Sethe, to boil, 333.
 Sey, seye, s yn, to say, 181, 468, 733.
 Seyl, sail, 696.
 Seynt, seynte, saint, 173, 697.
 Seynt, a girdle, 329.
 Shef, sheaf, 104.
 Sik, sick, 245.
 Sikerly, surely, certainly, 137.
 Sith, sithe, sithes, time, times, 485.
 Skalled, scabby, 627.
 Skathe, loss, misfortune, 446. See n.
 Sklendre, slender, slim, 587.
 Slee, sleen, slen, to slay, 661.
 Sleight, contrivance, craft, 604.
 Sleen, to sleep, 10.
 Sleeves, sleeves, 193.
 Smal, smale, small, 9, 146, 153.
 Smerte, smartly, 149.
 Smerte, to pain, displease, hurt, 230, 534.
 Smot, smoot, smote, 149.
 Smothe, smooth, smoothly, 676.
 Snewed, abounded (lit. snowed) 345.
 Snybbe, to snub, reprove, 523.
 Soberly, sad, solemn, 239.
 Solas, solas, mirth, 798.
 Solempne, festive, 209; important, 364. See note.
 Solempnely, pompously, 274.

Som, some, 646, &c.
 Somdel, somewhat, 174.
 Somer, summer, 394.
 Sompnour, apparitor, 543. See n.
 Sondry, sundry, 14.
 Sone, son, 79.
 Songe, sung, 711.
 Sonne, the sun, 7.
 Soo, so, 102.
 Soper, supper, 348.
 Sore, sorely, 230.
 Soth, sothe, sooth, true, truly, 845, &c.
 Sothly, truly, 117, 468.
 Soun, a sound, 674.
 Souper, supper, 743.
 Souple, supple, 203.
 Sovereyn, supreme, high, 57. See n.
 Sowne, to sound, 275, 565.
 Sowynge in, tending to, 307.
 Spak, spake, 124.
 Spare, abstain, or refrain from, 192, 737.
 Sparwe, sparrow, 626.
 Spacial, in special, specially, 444.
 Speede, to speed, succeed, 769.
 Speken, to speak, 142.
 Spiced, over-scrupulous, 526.
 Spores, spurs, 473.
 Squyer, squire, 79.
 Stele, to steal, 562.
 Stemedede, shone, 202.
 Stepe, steep, bright, glaring, 201.
 Sterre, star, 268.
 Stewe, a fish-pond, 350.
 Stiward, steward, 579. See note.
 Stonde, stonden, to stand, 88, 745.
 Stoon, stone, 774.
 Stoor, store, farm stock, 598.
 Stot, a stallion, 615.
 Straunge, foreign, 13. See note 464.
 Streem, stream, river, 464.
 Streyt, close, strict, 174.
 Streyte, closely, 467.
 Strike, a hank (of flax), 676.
 Strond, stronde, strand, shore, 12.
 Suffisance, sufficiency, 490.
 Surcote, overcoat, 617.
 Sward, sword, 112.
 Swere, to swear, 454.
 Swet, Swete sweet, 5, 20.

Swich
 Swink
 Swoot
 Swyn,
 Swynl
 Swynl
 Syke,
 Syn, si
 Tabar
 note.
 Taffat
 Taille,
 Takel,
 ment,
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 To, at
 Toller
 Tonge
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 Toun,
 Trety
 152.
 Trew
 531, 7
 Trom
 Trout
 Trow

Swich, such, 3, &c.
 Swinke, swynke, to labour, 186.
 Swoote, sweet, 1.
 Swyn, swine, 598.
 Swynk, labour, 188, 540.
 Swynkere, labourer, 531.
 Syke, sick, 424.
 Syn, since, 601, 853.

Tabard, a sleeveless frock, 541. See note.

Taffata, taffeta, 440.

Taille, a tally, 570. See note.

Takel, an arrow, literally any implement, 106. See note.

Talen, to tell tales, 772.

Tapicer, an upholsterer, 362. See n.

Tappestere, a barmaid, 241.

Targe, a target or shield, 471.

Techen, to teach, 308.

Thanne, then, 12.

Tharray, the array, 716.

Thei, they, 745, &c.

Thenres, the increase, 275.

Ther, there, where, 34, 43.

Ther as, where that, 172.

Therto, besides, 153, 757.

Thestat, the estate or rank, 716.

Thilke, the like, that, 182, &c.

Thinke, thynke, to seem, vb.
 impers., me thinketh, 37, it
 thoughte me, 385, him thought,
 682, us thoughte, 785.

Thise, these (pl.), 701.

Tho, those, 498, &c.

Thombe, thumb, 563.

Thonder, thunder, 492.

Thresshe, to thrash, 536.

Thries, thrice, 63, 562.

To, at, 30.

Tollen, to take toll or payment, 562.

Tonge, tongue, 712.

Top, head, 590.

Toun, town, 478.

Tretys, long and well proportioned,
 152. See note.

Trewe, trewely, true, truly, 481,
 531, 707.

Trompe, a trumpet, 674.

Trouthe, truth, 46, 763.

Trowe, to believe, 155, 524.

Trussed up, packed up, 681.

Tukked, coated, clothed, 621. See n.

Tunge, tongue, 265.

Tuo, two, 639.

Tweye, &c., two, twain, 704, 792, &c.

Twynne, to depart, separate, 835.

Typet, tippet, 233.

Unce, a small portion, 677.

Undergrowe, undergrown, 156.

Undertake, to affirm, 288.

Unknowe, unknown, 126.

Vavasour. See note on 360.

Venerye, hunting, 166. See note.

Verdite, verdict, sentence, 787.

Vernicle. See note on 685.

Verray, verrey, verrally, true,
 truly, very, 72, 338, 422.

Viage, travels, 77, 723.

Vigilies, vigils, 377.

Vileinye, unbecoming conduct,
 disgrace, 70, 726.

Vitaille, victuals, 569, 749.

Vouchesauf, vouchsafe, grant,
 807, 812.

Walet, wallet, 681, 686.

Wantoun, wanton, 208. See note.

Wantounesse, wantonness, 264.

War, waar, wary, cautious, 309;
 aware, 157.

Ware, to warn, 662.

Wastel breed, cake, 147. See n.

Waterles, out of the water, 180.

Wayte, to be on the look-out for,
 525, 571.

Webbe, weaver, 362.

Wende, wenden, to go, 16, 21.

Wepe, wepen, to weep, 230.

Wered, wore, 75, 564.

Werre, war, 47.

Werte, wart, 555.

Wette, wetted, 129.

Wex, wax, 675.

Wey, weye, way, 34, 467.

Whan, whanne, when, 5, 18, 179.

What, as an interjection, 854.

What, why, wherefore, 184.

Whelkes, blotches, 632.

Whil, whiles, whilst, 35, 397.

Whit, white, 238.
Widewe, widow, 253.
Wight, a person male or female, 71, 326.
Wit, understanding, wisdom, 279, 746.
Withholde, maintained, 511.
Withouten, without, 538; besides, 461.
Withseie, to gainsay, 805.
Woo, woeful, sorrowful, 351.
Wol, wole, will, 42; pl. *wolden*, 27.
Wolde, would, 548, &c.
Wonder, wondrously, wonderfully, 84, 483.
Wone, custom, usage, 335.
Wone, to dwell, 388.
Wonyng, dwelling, 606.
Wonne, won, conquered, 51.
Wood, wode, mad, 184, 582.
Woot (1st pers.), know, 389, 659.
Worthinesse, bravery, 50.
Worthy, worthi, brave, 47, 459.
Wrastlyng, wrestling, 548.
Wrighte, carpenter (literally a workman), 614. See note.

Wyd, wide, 491.
Wyf, wif, woman, wife, 234, 445.
Wympel, neck handkerchief, 151.
Wyn, wine, 334.
Wynnynges, gains, profits, 275.
Wys, wis, wise, 68, 309, 569.
Y, a prefix of past participles, another form of *i* (which see).
Y-cleped, called, 410.
Y-come, come, 77.
Y-drawe, drawn, 396.
Y-sene, to be seen, 592.
Y-teyed, tied, 457.
Y-wympel, having a wimpel. See note 151.
Y-wrought, wrought, 196.
Yeddynges, songs, 237.
Yeeldyng, return, produce, 596.
Yeer, year, years, 82, 347, 601.
Yeman, yeoman, 101. See note.
Yerde, rod, 149.
Yit, yet, 70.
Yong, yonge, young, 7, 79, 213.
Yow, you, 34, 38, &c.

THE END.

